Judiciary asks for $11.83M budget for FY 2022. PAGE 2
Interior gives $9M CIP funds to the CNMI. PAGE 3

75¢

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXI, Issue No. 59

www.saipantribune.com | THURSDAY MARCH 25, 2021 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

DRAMA AT CHCC BOARD

'Atalig ouster unconstitutional'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Ogumoro

Atalig

Santos

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board of trustees chair Lauri Ogumoro removed Fermin Atalig from the board last September 2020, in what Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) now says was an "illegal and unconstitutional" action.

In Ogumoro's Sept. 18, 2020, termination letter to Atalig, it cited Atalig's alleged

See ATALIG on Page 4

Law firm, IPI agree on payment plan

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A law firm that is suing Imperial Pacific International (CNMI), LLC to collect on $120,000 worth of attorney's fees and expenses has come to an agreement with the casino company on a payment plan to settle their disagreement.

In line with this, the law firm—Banes, Horey, Berman, and Miller, LLC—and IPI asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to issue an order reflecting their agreement: IPI will pay the law firm $15,000 by April 5

See LAW on Page 4

2 travelers test positive

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two travelers tested positive for COVID-19 yesterday, raising the CNMI's cumulative total to 159.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña confirmed in a text message that one of the travelers who arrived Monday tested positive for COVID-19.

The other traveler tested positive during the mandatory fifth-day testing, according to CHCC's statement.

CHCC said both individuals have been in quarantine and were moved to the designated isolation area for monitoring. Additionally, contact tracing for the most immediate contacts of the new confirmed case, including passengers on the same flight, have been initiated.

CHCC to accept on-site registration

Muña said that CHCC plans

See TRAVELERS on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 7pm, March 24, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,786	3	7,789
Recovered	7,631	2	7,633
Active	19	3	22
Deaths	134	0	134
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			138,294

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	157	2	159
Traced via Travel Screening	121	2	123
Traced via Community Screening	36	0	36
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			8

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Saipan:	Tinian:	Rota:
Dose 1: 13,086	Dose 1: 820	Dose 1: 939
Dose 2: 9,916	Dose 2: 370	Dose 2: 511

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

Over 100 seen daily at PH consular outreach

By NEIL FAMA
neil_fama@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The mobile consular outreach of the Philippine Consulate General-Guam at the Sun Palace Hotel Saipan has been seeing more than 100 individuals per day since they started last Thursday, March 18. By the time the outreach ends on April 11, close to 3,000 Filipinos and their families are

See OVER on Page 4

Social distancing protocols are strictly enforced during the Philippine Consulate General-Guam's mobile consular outreach at the Philippine Honorary Consulate-CNMI Support Office at the Sun Palace Hotel Saipan. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Taste both ends of the gastronomic spectrum when you visit Sweet & Salty at Kada Dia.

PAGE 11

WORLD
AstraZeneca's repeated missteps in reporting vaccine data could do lasting damage to its credibility.

PAGE 14

LIFE & STYLE
Prince Harry has joined the corporate world as an executive at a mental health firm.

PAGE 16

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Judiciary asks for $11.83M budget for FY 2022, or $7M more

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

- Drug Court Division's workforce reduced to 50%
- Decrease in supervision, monitoring of Drug Court participants result in uptick of drug use relapses
- Family Court Division has heavy caseload as it has only two staff

The CNMI Judiciary has asked the Legislature for a fiscal year 2022 budget of $11,832,100, which is approximately $7 million more than what is currently allocated to the Judiciary.

CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro and Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja stated in their budget request that the $11.83 million is not outside their previous budget requests, and that this reflects what the Judiciary truly needs to run effectively.

In their budget request submitted early this month to Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) and House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), Castro and Naraja said the Judiciary's budget needs have taken a back seat for many years due to other issues in the CNMI. They said the lack of adequate funding has continuously strained judicial services and stretched employees extremely thin, both physically and mentally.

Castro and Naraja said these challenges were exacerbated by the shutdown of the heating ventilation and air-conditioning system at the Guma Hustisia, super typhoons Soudelor and Yutu, and now the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The domino effect of these challenges, coupled with economic downfall, resulted in dire hardships," the chief justice and the presiding judge said.

Castro

For one, the Drug Court Division workforce has been halved and the program is currently operating on a skeletal flow. "The decrease in community supervision and monitoring of participants have resulted in an uptick of drug use relapses, which inevitably impacts families," Castro and Naraja said.

This, they added, hinders the Judiciary's commitment to adhere to the national trend of focusing on treatment-based methods and reducing punitive approaches.

Similarly, they said, the Family Court Division is burdened with heavy caseload with only two staff on board. "The effects of this reduction are felt by the most vulnerable in our community, as many involved in Family Court matters are unrepresented by lawyers," Castro and Naraja said.

They noted that, as of February 2021, there are already 70 new family court cases filed, one-third of them being domestic violence.

In 2020, the Family Court Division witnessed an increase in the number of requests to place child support and alimony cases predating 2019 back on the Family Court docket due to clients' inability to pay, they said.

Castro and Naraja said the Office of Adult Probation handles heavy caseload far exceeding the officer-to-offender ratio recommended by the American Probation and Parole Association, impacting public safety.

They said the Judiciary also lost employees on Rota and Tinian.

Despite these setbacks, they said they strive from day to day to carry out their constitutional duties and responsibilities and aim to enhance the justice system in line with national standards and developing legal trends.

Naraja

They cited that the Judiciary hosted its language access training for court interpreters, court staff, and other agencies, and adopted various policies consistent with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In response to the pandemic, they said they quickly implemented telecourt hearings and enhanced technology to prevent interruption of judicial services.

Castro and Naraja said they also implemented an e-filing system for criminal and traffic cases.

Despite the shortage of staff, the Judiciary also opened a help center to assist the public with navigating new COVID-19 protocols.

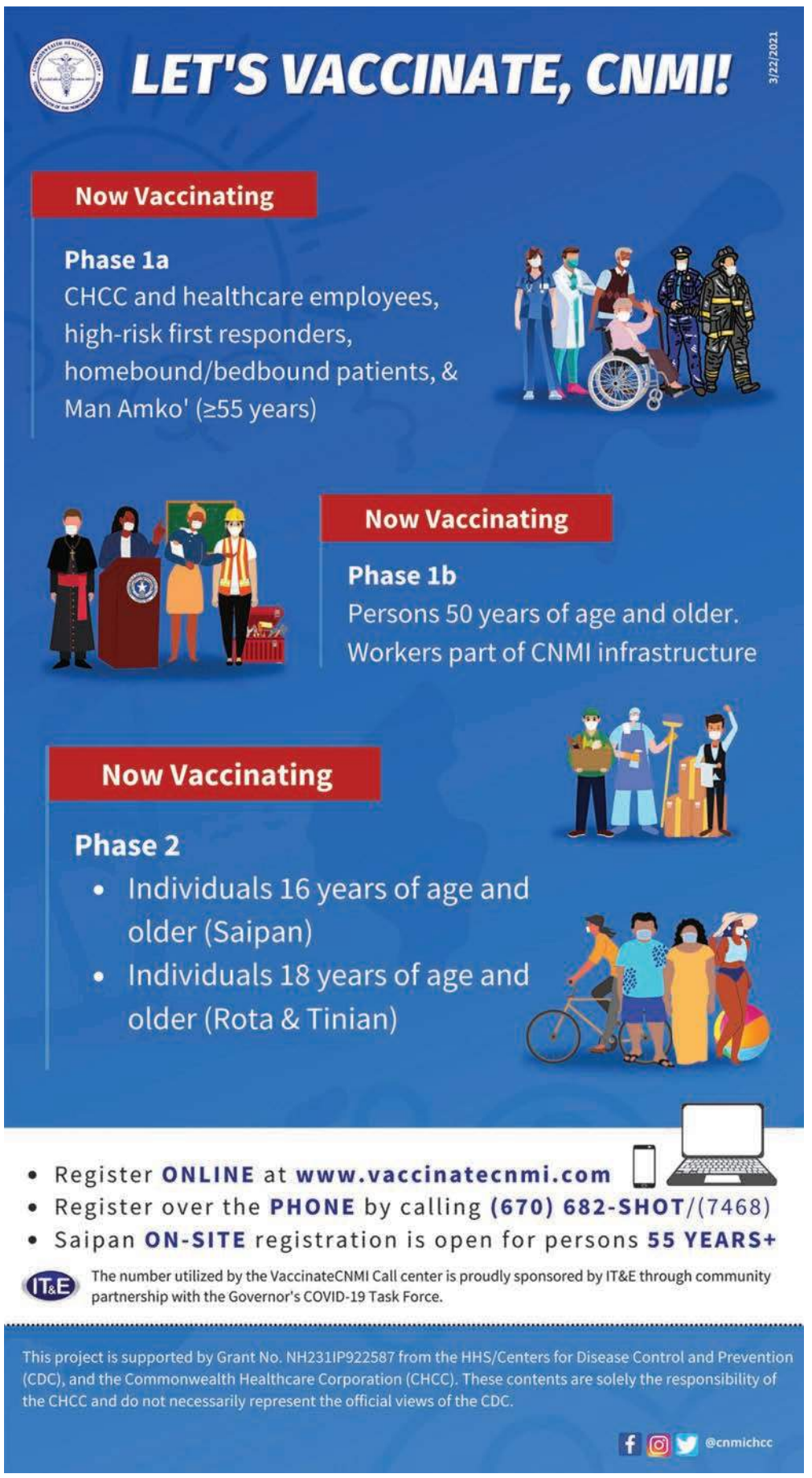
"In sum, the Judiciary exemplified agility, resilience, and flexibility by remaining open to change and growth in the face of adversity," Castro and Naraja said.

They said the fiscal year 2022 budget call issued by the Office of Management and Budget "is alarming."

"The Judiciary is not a department within the Executive Branch. It is a third branch of our government tasked with a heavy burden of ensuring the rule of law is maintained on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota," they pointed out.

Castro and Naraja said they are cognizant that the CNMI is facing unprecedented economic and public health challenges, but that it is their solemn duty to submit a request that accurately reflects the needs of the court, notwithstanding the circumstances.

They asked the Legislature to approve their budget request and give them the flexibility to move the funds from one category to another to address their urgent needs from time to time.


LET'S VACCINATE, CNMI!
3/22/2021
Now Vaccinating
Phase 1a
CHCC and healthcare employees,
high-risk first responders,
homebound/bedbound patients, &
Man Amko' (≥55 years)
Now Vaccinating
Phase 1b
Persons 50 years of age and older.
Workers part of CNMI infrastructure
Now Vaccinating
Phase 2
• Individuals 16 years of age and older (Saipan)
• Individuals 18 years of age and older (Rota & Tinian)
• Register ONLINE at www.vaccinatecnmi.com
• Register over the PHONE by calling (670) 682-SHOT/(7468)
• Saipan ON-SITE registration is open for persons 55 YEARS+
IT&E
The number utilized by the VaccinateCNMI Call center is proudly sponsored by IT&E through community partnership with the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force.
This project is supported by Grant No. NH231IP922587 from the HHS/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). These contents are solely the responsibility of the CHCC and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.
@cnmichcc

CAMP TINIAN

Construction Electrician Constructionman Jose Silva, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 4, wires electrical lines providing power to berthing buildings on Camp Tinian to test electrical receptacles. The camp will support future Naval Construction Force and U.S. Marine Corps operations on Tinian. NMCB-4 is forward deployed throughout the Indo-Pacific region and United States ready to support major combat operations, theater security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. Seabees provide general engineering and civil support to Navy, Marine Corps and joint operational forces globally.

U.S. NAVY/CM2 WENHAN FAN

Interior gives $9M CIP funds to the CNMI

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs announced yesterday the award of $9.08 million in Capital Improvement Project grant funding for a variety of priority needs across the CNMI.

"We are pleased to support the CIP priorities identified by Gov. Ralph [DLG] Torres [that] support and improve the quality of life for the

» **Funds will support renovations at the hospital, health clinics, schools, and the utility in the Commonwealth**

people of the Northern Mariana Islands," said Nikolao Pula, OIA director and acting assistant Interior secretary. "These funds will support important renovation upgrades and maintenance needs at several important public facilities, including the hospital, health clinics, and schools in the territory."

The Capital Improvement Project fiscal year 2021 grants announced are:

■ **Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvements on Saipan: $2,813,090** will be used for CIP Program administration and infrastructure needs in the territory. Additionally, funds will be used to construct a new Municipal Council building on Saipan and renovate and improve buildings for the Division of Procurement and the Attorney General's Office in Susupe.

■ **Commonwealth Utilities Corp.: $2,049,000** will be used to purchase heavy equipment and a crane to support utilities work and maintenance in the territory.

■ **Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.: $1,000,000** will be used for roof repair and coating at the Commonwealth Health Center.

■ **CNMI Public School System: $1,000,000** will be used toward deferred maintenance needs at public schools throughout the territory.

■ **Tinian Health Clinic: $984,955** will be used to conduct roof repair and coating at the Tinian Health Clinic.

■ **Rota Health Clinic: $984,955** will be used to conduct facility, fire alarm system, and elevator upgrades at the Rota Health Clinic.

■ **Garapan Stormwater Management: $250,000** will be used to support the Garapan Coastal Community Resilience Initiative for Wetlands and Corals, a watershed management plan of green infrastructure integration projects to improve capacity and quality of stormwater retention in critical utility corridors in Garapan. The goal is to restore the natural capacities of wetland and marine systems and reduce risk and impacts of terrestrial flooding and storm surge on Saipan. This project has received support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund and other partners. ***(PR)***

TRIPLE J SAYS Yes!
yes! to EASY FINANCING
yes! to EASY TRADE-IN
yes! to FAST & FRIENDLY
QUALITY USED CARS
2016 NISSAN 370Z NISMO
SALE PRICE $33,995
4,715 MILES STK: 20P312A KBB: $33,475
2020 TOYOTA TACOMA SR5 SPORT
SALE PRICE $35,995
8,175 MILES STK: 20C003 KBB: $36,485
2019 LEXUS LX-570 4WD
SALE PRICE $89,995
2,348 MILES STK:19P311
2017 TOYOTA YARIS HATCHBACK
SALE PRICE $11,995
24,305 MILES • STK:17BC53703 • KBB: $12,676
2017 MAZDA MAZDA6 GT
SALE PRICE $15,995
44,751 MILES • STK:17P305 • KBB: $17,242
2013 TOYOTA TACOMA SR 4WD
SALE PRICE $23,995
130,884 MILES • STK:3P294 • KBB: $24,581
2014 KIA SPORTAGE LX
SALE PRICE $11,995
64,625 MILES • STK:21H025A • KBB: $12,488
2019 HYUNDAI KONA 2WD
SALE PRICE $16,995
11,761 MILES • STK:19HS962 • KBB: $18,793
2019 MAZDA CX-5 GT AWD
SALE PRICE $26,995
8,214 MILES • STK:19P299 • KBB: $28,460
2017 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SALE PRICE $13,995
34,789 MILES • STK:7R218 • KBB: $15,129
2017 MAZDA CX-3 GT AWD
SALE PRICE $16,995
18,475 MILES • STK: 7P295 • KBB: $18,470
2018 TOYOTA TACOMA SR5
SOLD
SALE PRICE $27,995
5,150 MILES • STK:21H019A • KBB: $29,446
2016 TOYOTA PRIUS C
SALE PRICE $14,995
48,814 MILES • STK:20D134A • KBB: $16,585
2018 HONDA CIVIC EXT
SALE PRICE $17,995
10,640 MILES • STK:18HS946 • KBB: $20,609
2017 FORD F-150 XLT
SOLD
SALE PRICE $30,995
64,480 MILES • STK:17P308 • KBB: $33,135
2016 HYUNDAI VELOSTER
SALE PRICE $14,995
39,217MILES • STK: 20H068-A • KBB: $15,830
2019 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SE
SOLD
SALE PRICE $18,995
11,486 MILES • STK:19HS967 • KBB: $19,633
2017 TOYOTA LAND CRUISER 4WD
SALE PRICE $69,995
28,046 MILES • STK:17P310 • KBB: $72,425
2018 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SALE PRICE $14,995
7,910 MILES • STK:8HS875 • KBB: $19,496
2015 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LE
SALE PRICE $18,995
62,811 MILES • STK:5HS735A • KBB: $19,031
2020 NISSAN GT-R 50TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
SOLD
SALE PRICE $109,995
587 MILES • STK:20P312
Customers First
TRIPLE J
TRIPLE J MOTORS
Beach Road, Chalan LauLau OPEN Open: Mon-Fri: 8am to 6pm • Sat: 8am to 5pm
Sales Office: 234-7133 • Parts & Service: 322-7134 autosales@triplejsaipan.com
PASSPORT to SAVINGS
TRIPLE J ADVANTAGE
WWW.TRIPLEJSAIPAN.COM
*On approved credit (OAC). Some conditions apply. Doc fees and registration not included. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for more details. Maximum credit card payment toward vehicle purchase is $2,500.

CLEANING UP THE BEACHES
Organizers and participants of the Kristo Rai Trevally Hunters Derby gather for a group photo near the Atkins Toyota intersection in Oleai/San Jose after they collected a truckload of trash from the Garapan Fishing Base to Oleai last Friday morning. The group took time out from the fishing derby and picked up trash to help the government and the community in cleaning up the beaches.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

ATALIG

From Page 1

failure to attend board meetings as the reason for his ouster. Atalig later claimed that he only got sporadic notices of scheduled board meetings and he always attended those meetings where he was informed beforehand.

In a letter last Tuesday to Ogumoro, Santos described the reason for removing Atalig as "highly questionable." Santos pointed out that Atalig was denied due process and she accused Ogumoro of usurping Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' authority to appoint or remove board members.

Santos said the CHCC board of trustees was established by a Commonwealth statute that cannot supersede the CNMI Constitution.

As of press time yesterday, *Saipan Tribune* was still awaiting comments from Ogumoro.

In her letter, Santos said Ogumoro made Atalig's removal from the CHCC board effective on the same day she wrote the removal letter. As a result, Atalig never received any notice of any scheduled board meetings thereafter, she said.

In fact, Santos said, Atalig never knew he was no longer a board member after Sept. 17, 2020, until he received Ogumoro's letter by mail on Jan. 5, 2021.

Santos said Atalig claimed that he was not provided a copy of the board's bylaws when he came on board.

She said Atalig also shared that he would sometimes get an email of scheduled meetings and sometimes not. The senator said that, according to Atalig, when he receives an advance notice of the meeting and is able to attend, he would participate through Zoom at the Rota Health Clinic.

She said Atalig stated that he always makes it a priority to attend the meetings where he had been notified in advance.

Whatever the case may be, Santos said, Ogumoro's authority to remove Atalig as a board member is even more egregious as it violates Commonwealth law and the CNMI Constitution.

She said the statute specifically provides that the governor may remove a trustee in accordance with Article III, Section 21 of the CNMI Constitution. Santos said the governor's removal authority requires a serious offense.

She said non-attendance at a meeting does not come close to a justifiable removal by the governor, let alone by Ogumoro as a board chairperson and based on the board's bylaws.

The senator asked the board to reinstate Atalig to represent the people of Rota.

Citing the Commonwealth Code and the governor's removal authority as outlined in the CNMI Constitution, Santos asked Ogumoro on behalf of Atalig to rescind Atalig's removal, which she described as void as it violates the CNMI law and Constitution.

The senator said Ogumoro's erroneous action in terminating Atalig has adversely affected the interests of the people of Rota by depriving them of a voice on the board since Sept. 18, 2020.

TRAVELERS

From Page 1

to open and add more on-site slots to accommodate walk-in patients who want to get vaccinated.

Muña said CHCC opened these slots for walk-in patients starting yesterday. Once CHCC reaches 90% of the people who are scheduled to get their shots today, on-site registration will continue today, March 25.

CHCC has now expanded its COVID-19 vaccination to those who are 16 years and older.

CHCC said that the vaccination rollout depends on CHCC verification and their daily capacity. In previous interviews, CHCC chief operations officer Subroto Banerji said CHCC vaccinates at least 400 people every day.

When asked if the COVID-19 vaccine will be provided annually like the flu shot, Muña said that as more people get vaccinated and more information on variants and data are gathered, CHCC will have enough information for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to determine if a booster shot is needed.

So far, the CNMI has vaccinated 14,845 people out of the estimated 55,000 people in the CNMI—this includes Rota and Tinian. Out of the 14,845, 10,797 have already completed the full vaccination series.

LAW

From Page 1

and then $12,500 on the fifth of each month thereafter.

Both IPI and the law firm submitted their stipulation to the district court last Tuesday.

In their motion for an order in aid of judgment, it was agreed that IPI's final payment will include post-judgment interest at the rate the court will approve, along with attorney's fees and costs.

The law firm sued IPI in district court last September 2020 for breach of contract, implied breach of contract, and quantum meruit. The law firm claimed that IPI owes them $120,000.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the law firm represented IPI in two civil lawsuits filed by Pacific Rim Land Development LLC in the mechanic's lien action and defamation lawsuit filed by USA Fanter Corp. Ltd. In the other lawsuit they represented IPI in filing a complaint against FSM Recycling Corp. relating to theft of construction materials at the IPI warehouses.

OVER

From Page 1

expected to have availed of consular services.

Consul Alex O. Vallespin, who is leading the consular team, said yesterday that, so far, they get more than 100 passport renewal applications and more than 30 dual citizenship applications each day.

Vallespin said he and his team of five arrived on Saipan last March 12 and, after a six-day quarantine at Kanoa Resort, they got to work immediately at the Philippine Honorary Consulate-CNMI Support Office at the Sun Palace Hotel.

Today, 25 dual-citizenship applicants will be participating in an oath-taking ceremony, which is the final step in reacquiring Filipino citizenship, Vallespin said.

The consular outreach team—Vallespin (team leader); Jermyn Julius Checa, passport officer; Fritz Gerald Fernandez, passport officer; Ferdinand Villamor, consular officer—Ellen Morco, collecting officer, will be providing consular services on Saipan until April 7, including on weekends. This is touted to be the longest mobile consular outreach according to a poll in the Foreign Service posts of the DFA.

The team will go to Tinian on April 17 and 18, where there are about 150-200 applicants for passport renewal and 10 for dual citizenship.

"It's been more than a year since we've been [on] Saipan, since last March 2020 prior to the lockdown. Before the pandemic, we would visit the CNMI five times—three days for Saipan, one for Tinian, and one for Rota," said Vallespin.

Vallespin explained that they've been planning this outreach since November and December 2020, in coordination with Philippine honorary consul to the CNMI Glicerio "Eli" Arago, and Ariel Mariano.

The decision to extend their stay in the CNMI, Vallespin said, was deemed to be more cost-effective, based on the extra quarantine days when they aren't able to provide services. Previous consular outreaches usually lasted only four days.

Vallespin assured that COVID-19 protocols are being strictly implemented at the site. Standard protocols such as mandatory wearing of face masks, temperature checks, a sign-in sheet for contact tracing, social distancing, distribution of sanitizers and alcohol pads, and open-door ventilation are all being implemented.

An addition to this, Vallespin said that his team including himself, were all double-dose vaccinated before arriving in the CNMI.

Customers First
TRIPLE J
Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store
WHERE CUSTOMERS ALWAYS COME FIRST!
@paylesssuperfreshtruckloadstore
@paylesssuperfresh
(670) 234-1444

THIS WEEK'S BIG SALE
MAR 26-APR 01

Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store
Online Store!
www.paylesssuperfresh.com
We Deliver! • Shop Now!

AUSSIE
WALK-A-BOUT PORTABLE CHARCOAL GRILL
SALE PRICE $79.95

HDX XL UTILITY
4 SHELF CABINET
SALE PRICE $199.99

GIBSON ELITE
SCALLOP BUFFET 12 PC DINNERWARE SET
SALE PRICE $34.99

DRESSING TABLE
W/ SLIDING DOOR MIRROR (DT-1178)
SALE PRICE $169.99

SHOE RACK
5-TIER W/NON-WOVEN SHELVES (11574)
SALE PRICE $11.99

STERILITE
27 GAL INDUSTRIAL HINGED TOTE
SALE PRICE $27.99

WALL CLOCK IRON
WITH TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY METER
SALE PRICE $12.99

OSTER 0.9 CUFT
SS FACE MICROWAVE
SALE PRICE $121.99

HP DESKJET
ALL-IN-ONE WIRELESS INKJET PRINTER
SALE PRICE $159.99

HOME TRENDZ
3 PC BATH MAT SET
SALE PRICE $11.99

CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF®
TOP SIRLOIN STEAK
SALE PRICE $6.99/LB.

RUSSET POTOTOES
SALE PRICE 89¢/LB.

BEAR POND FARM
PESTO
SALE PRICE $5.29

EARTH BALANCE
BUTTERY SPREADS
SALE PRICE $5.29

DORITOS CHIPS
7 OZ
SALE PRICE $3.69

FRANK'S
RED HOT SAUCE 12 OZ
SALE PRICE $3.49

BUSH'S
BAKED BEANS 28 OZ
SALE PRICE $2.99

WILD MIKE'S
PIZZAS
SALE PRICE $7.99

JOSÉ OLÉ
MINI BEEF TACOS 16.3 OZ
SALE PRICE $6.99

AMY'S
MAC N CHEESE 9 OZ (REGULAR OR NON DAIRY)
SALE PRICE $3.99

Customers First! Rewards Plus! Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store

DOUBLE POINTS OF THE WEEK!
LOOK FOR DOUBLE BONUS POINT TAGS, CHECK YOUR RECEIPT FOR YOUR TOTAL POINTS!
Redeem points for ANY ITEM in STORE!
2X BONUS POINTS ITEM

LEMONS
SALE PRICE $1.39/LB.
GET 2X BONUS POINTS ITEM

BOUND
5'X7' AREA RUG
SALE PRICE $19.99
GET 2X BONUS POINTS ITEM

NIAGRA WATERS
24 PK
SALE PRICE $6.49
GET 2X BONUS POINTS ITEM

CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF®
FLAT IRON STEAKS
SALE PRICE $6.99/LB.
GET 2X BONUS POINTS ITEM

BEYOND SAUSAGE
HOT ITALIAN OR ORIGINAL BRAT
SALE PRICE $6.99
GET 2X BONUS POINTS ITEM

NOT YET A MEMBER?
SIGN UP!
IT'S FREE
**SOME RESTRICTION APPLY, SEE STORES FOR DETAILS!

Customers First! Rewards Plus! Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store
SHOP » $1= 3 POINTS EARNED » REDEEM FOR ANY ITEM IN STORE!

Demapan expects amendments to his CEDA bill

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Discussion for action did not push through during Tuesday's House of Representatives' session on Rep. Angel A. Demapan's (R-Saipan) bill that will create the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority. Instead, Demapan's House Bill 22-21 has now been calendared for discussion and action in today's session.

Demapan

In an interview Tuesday, Demapan said he believes there are some amendments to his bill that are going to be offered today. "We have yet to see those amendments so we look forward to coming back on Thursday in addressing the amendments and to see whether it's favorable or not to the intent of the bill," he said.

Nonetheless, Demapan said, he hopes that House members can support the legislation in support of economic development so they can be begin working on restoring the CNMI's economic footing once the Commonwealth emerges from this pandemic.

House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) decided to continue the session for today, Thursday, to give way to the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations' meeting that afternoon.

Last Feb. 26, the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers recommended the transformation of the Commonwealth Development Authority into Commonwealth Economic Development Authority. Demapan said prior to that presentation, he had already introduced House Bill 22-21.

He said the Saipan Chamber of Commerce has described the bill as truly a revenue generating bill that will be providing the tools and authority to what would become CEDA and realize new diversified investments in the CNMI.

Co-authored by six other lawmakers, H.B. 22-21 would strengthen the tools and powers of the CNMI government and expand economic development.

Developmental disabilities awareness meeting at GMS

To increase awareness and understanding of the spectrum of developmental disabilities among its staff and student families, Green Meadow School recently hosted a short webinar featuring Tai D. Doram, a certified cognitive behavior specialist from the CNMI Behavior Health Planning Council.

Doram's presentation covered several topics involved with developmental disabilities, including early signs and screening and risk factors. He also covered the variety of disability categories and the proactive steps necessary in handling a child with developmental disabilities. Some of GMS' long-time staff members were surprised to learn new disability risk factors that they had not learned about in previous trainings.

GMS principal Milagros Songcuan also brought up the relatively new movement called "Disable the Label," which works on removing the stigma against people and persons with disabilities through education and outreach and promoting understanding and inclusion.

The month of March is dedicated to increase awareness and understanding of the spectrum of developmental disabilities. It is estimated that there are over 6 million individuals with developmental disabilities that live in the U.S. mainland and its territories. President Ronald Reagan first declared March as Developmental Disabilities Month in 1987.

"We strive to achieve inclusion to accept these individuals with unique strengths into our classrooms, workplaces, houses of worship and communities," said GMS in a statement yesterday.

The CNMI proclamation and message from the executive director of the CNMI Council of Development Disabilities, which was originally shared on March 1, was also read at the meeting. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND Floor Arrival Bldg.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
Phone: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE OF BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that there will Board Committee Meetings on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, beginning 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom at the Airport Fire Station, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan.

AGENDA

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

I. **Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (January 26, 2021)**
II. **Public Comments**
III. **Old Business: None.**
IV. **New Business:**
1. Ricondo Rate Study – Change Order No. 1
2. Fiscal Year 2019 Audit
3. Supplemental Request: ATCT Renovations CM Services
4. Supplemental Request: ARFF Training Facility General Repairs
5. Supplemental Budget Request: Seaport VCRS Upgrade
6. Supplemental Budget Request: Rota West Harbor Fence
7. Rent Relief
   a. Airport
   b. Seaport
8. Austerity Measures
9. Updated Financial Affairs Committee Report

V. **Executive Session (if needed)**
VI. **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
VII. **Adjournment**

AIRPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE

I. **Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (January 26, 2021)**
II. **Public Comments**
III. **Old Business:**
1. Solar
2. Mobil
3. Power Plants 2 (Rota) and 3 (Saipan)
4. Draft Land Management Regulations

IV. **New:**
1. Currency Exchange Concession
   a. Scope of Concession
   b. Procurement Method
   c. Evaluation Plan
2. Updated Airport Facilities Committee Report

V. **Executive Session (if needed)**
VI. **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
VII. **Adjournment**

PERSONNEL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

I. **Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (January 26, 2021)**
II. **Public Comments**
III. **Old Business: None.**
IV. **New:**
1. Job Vacancy Announcement: Grants Coordinator
2. Job Vacancy Announcement: Electrician
3. Updated Personnel Affairs Committee Report

V. **Executive Session (if needed)**
VI. **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
VII. **Adjournment**

SEAPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE

I. **Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (January 26, 2021)**
II. **Public Comments**
III. **Old Business:**
1. Tinian Marine Stevedore
2. Tinian Shipping

IV. **New:**
1. Echo Dock Award
2. Updated Seaport Facilities Committee Report

V. **Executive Session (if needed)**
VI. **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
VII. **Adjournment**

Tune in online as we stream live on the Commonwealth Ports Authority's Facebook page. Written testimony on the agenda items must be sent via email before the meeting to cpa.admin@pticom.com. Attendees (in person) must wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Barrie C. Toves
Airport Facilities Chair

Ramon A. Tebuteb
Financial Affairs Chair

Pete P. Reyes
Seaport Facilities Chair

Joseph M. Diaz
Personnel Affairs Chair

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND Floor Arrival Bldg.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
Phone: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) hereby gives notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom at the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. **PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (February 19, 2021)

II. **PUBLIC COMMENT(S)**
III. **CORRESPONDENCES**
IV. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
1. Financial Affairs Committee
2. Airport Facilities Committee
3. Seaport Facilities Committee
4. Personnel Affairs Committee

V. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
VI. **OLD BUSINESS:**
1. Engineering Assistance
2. Tinian Shipping

VII. **NEW BUSINESS:**
1. Saipan Stevedore Company Lease
2. Currency Exchange Concession
   a. Scope of Concession
   b. Procurement Method
   c. Evaluation Plan
3. Echo Dock Award
4. Ricondo Rate Study – Change Order No. 1
5. Fiscal Year 2019 Audit
6. Supplemental Request: ATCT Renovations CM Services
7. Supplemental Request: ARFF Training Facility General Repairs
8. Supplemental Budget Request: Seaport VCRS Upgrade
9. Supplemental Budget Request: Rota West Harbor Fence
10. Rent Relief
    a. Airport
    b. Seaport
11. Job Vacancy Announcement: Grants Coordinator
12. Job Vacancy Announcement: Electrician
13. Land Management Regulations
14. Austerity Measures

VIII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
• Legal Counsel Reports: Legal matters/Litigation
IX. **MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**
X. **ADJOURNMENT**

Tune in online as we stream live on the Commonwealth Ports Authority's Facebook page. Written testimony on the agenda items must be sent via email before the meeting to cpa.admin@pticom.com. Attendees (in person) must wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Kimberlyn King-Hinds
Chairwoman, Board of Directors

March 24, 2020

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID
ITB21-CHCC/FACILITY-001

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 19th, 2021 TIME:10:00AM (CHST)

"PROCUREMENT OF SURVEILLANCE CAMERA SYSTEM"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP21-MHC-052

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 12, 2021 • TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"IN-DOOR BUILDING MAINTENANCE, EXHIBIT MAINTENANCE, MANAGEMENT, OUTDOOR BUILDING, AND GROUND MAINTENANCE FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB MAY BE MADE IN ANY MODE OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION TO **MR. JAMES MACARANAS**, VIA E-MAIL AT cnmimuseum2017@gmail.com **NO LATER THAN 4:30 P.M., LOCAL TIME, MARCH 29, 2021.** ALL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SHALL BE SHARED WITH ALL PROPECTIVE PROPOSERS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ DANNY AQUINO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MHC

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
P.O. BOX 500861 CK
SAIPAN, MP 96950
TEL: (670) 664-3200/1
FAX: (670) 664-3237
info@mymarianas.com
www.mymarianas.com

REGULAR BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a **Regular Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in MVA's Conference Room, Saipan, MP 96950.

MEETING AGENDA

1) **Preliminary Matters**
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
   d. Adoption of Minutes
      i. Regular Board Meeting — March 11, 2021
2) **Public Comments**
3) **Committee Reports** — Fund Status
4) **Old Business**
   a. Personnel
   b. COVID-19 Vaccination for MVA Employees
   c. MVA-Taiwan
5) **Executive Session**
6) **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
7) **Adjournment**

/s/ Gloria Cavanagh
Acting Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

Success of Guam refunding bond sale seen as proof of investor confidence

HAGÅTÑA, Guam—The Government of Guam proved again that Guam's bonds are a sound investment for bondholders after the Guam Hotel Occupancy Tax refunding bond sale last Friday exceeded all expectations in refunding the Series 2011 Hotel Occupancy Tax Bonds, with savings in the current fiscal year in excess of $3 million to be dedicated to Guam's tourism recovery efforts as well as significant debt service savings over the next several years.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic and its adverse impacts on hotel credits, Team Guam remained undeterred and committed two weeks to engage in investor calls to answer inquiries about Guam and the overall economy before the bond sale. As a result, GovGuam's HOT Refunding Bonds Series 2021A received strong investor demand with $1.06 billion in total orders placed by 24 different investors. Of those investors, 10 firms placed orders for the entire series of bonds.

The Guam HOT bonds received a positive investor response, which created an opportunity for Team Guam to lower the interest rates twice during the bond pricing process, going from an initial indicative pricing level of 3.42% to a final All in True Interest Cost of 3.23%. This overall effort allowed GovGuam to refund $72.3 million in existing bonds with $58.9 million of refunding bonds, a Net Present Value savings of $19 million. The HOT Bond closing is scheduled for the late hours of March 31, 2021.

"We are pleased with the results of the HOT Bond Sale as it provides significant savings over the life of the bond and fiscal resources for Guam's tourism recovery. The tremendous response is evidence that bond investors are confident in the future of Guam and our ability to rebound after this global pandemic," said Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero.

"Governor Leon Guerrero and I want to congratulate our fiscal team and the Guam Visitors Bureau on a job well done. The savings we will realize from this bond sale is part of the foundation for our recovery, and we are committed to continuing our efforts to rebuild a stronger Guam," added Lt. Gov. Josh Tenorio.

"The refunding of the HOT bonds is great news for our island and our number one industry," said GVB vice president Dr. Gerry Perez. "We look forward to dedicating the total savings realized from this transaction to aid in our economic recovery plans during this pandemic. ***(PR)***

Tax break eyed for developers who use cultural designs

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

File photo shows Rep. Joseph A. Flores (Ind-Saipan), left, listening to then-Rep. Franklin R. Babauta (Ind-Saipan) during a House's session. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Rep. Joseph A. Flores (Ind-Saipan) has introduced a bill that will provide developers in the CNMI an incentive through infrastructure tax credits when they incorporate local cultural characteristics into the development of new structures and tourism amenities.

Co-authored by members of the House of Representatives' minority bloc, Flores' House Bill 22-42 will amend the Commonwealth Code to authorize developer infrastructure tax credits for appropriate Chamorro and Carolinian culture designs.

The bill has been referred to House Committee on Ways and Means chaired by Rep. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota).

Flores stated in the bill that incorporating the CNMI's culture into the tourism infrastructure will enhance the uniqueness of the CNMI's tourism product. By providing incentives for these types of development, this will enhance the presence of the culture in the environment where the community lives, he added.

Under his legislation, the value of any new development that the developer dedicates to Chamorro or Carolinian cultural designs shall be credited against its tax liability and shall apply to the appropriate trust account.

Such culturally appropriate designs must be concurred by the Department of Public Works, the Historic Preservation Office, and the Commonwealth Arts Council to ensure consistency and accuracy in the design.

In the event that the amount of tax credit exceeds the tax liability, the excess tax credit shall not constitute a right to a refund or be used as a credit toward future development projects.

Presently, the Developers Tax Credit provides four criteria of acceptable costs that can be credited against the 2% tax on the development cost. Under this legislation, a fifth criterion through an amendment of the Commonwealth Code will be added to deduct from the total tax liability the costs incurred in including culturally and historically relevant features in the development.

Flores said the Chamorro and Carolinian indigenous cultures are unique in the world and offer the international tourism marketplace an opportunity to expand their cultural experiences while in the Commonwealth. He said the cultural resources present in the CNMI are, however, underutilized in the marketing of the CNMI to prospective tourists, and their presence here provides limited opportunity to experience the islands' culture.

The lawmaker said existing facilities do not represent the cultural art or images inherent within the islands' heritage, and culture and designs of privately operated tourist attractions are without signifying characteristics that distinguish them from any other location in the world.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXI, Issue No. 43

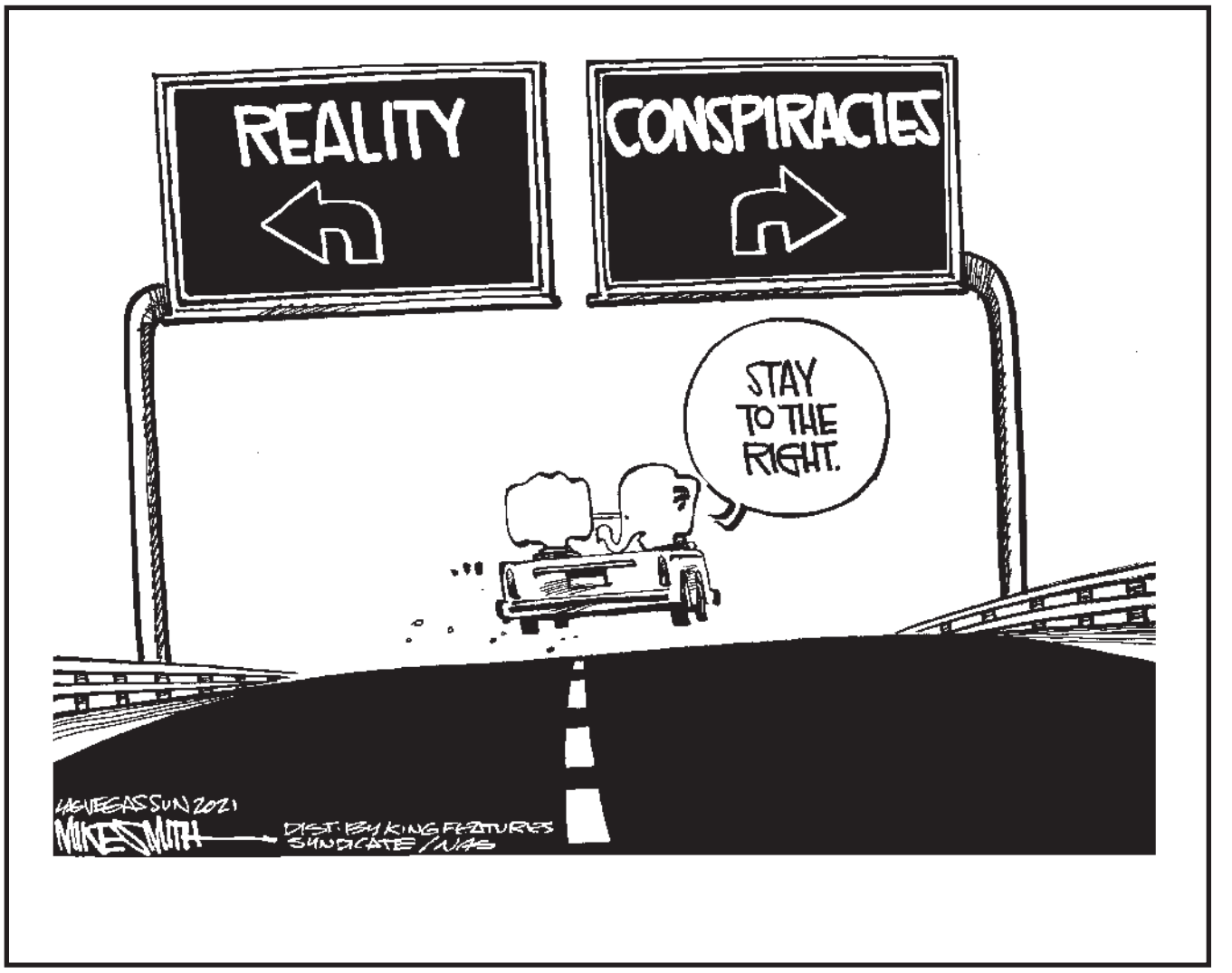
Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association



EDITORIAL

Our gun scourge once again claims victims in Colorado

Here we are again. Television screens filled with images of police cars and survivors telling panicked stories about the terror they endured as they process a close brush with death. The flashes of heroism recalled. The trickled-out stories of the lives of the unlucky who couldn't manage to evade a bullet, and the scramble to figure out what possibly could have led another young man to commit such a murderous act.

The latest chapter in the endless book of American violence was written, tragically, at a King Soopers grocery store Monday afternoon in the liberal enclave of Boulder, Colorado, near Denver. Once again, authorities couldn't immediately suggest what motivated the shooter or who exactly was the target of this particular flash of rage, or hatred, or nihilism, or sickness that left 10 people dead.

It's important to recognize that these victims were not strangled, were not knifed, were not poisoned or beaten or thrown from windows or hanged or drowned or made victim to whatever other fancy might have entered the mind of a murderer. They were shot dead while they walked through the routines of their daily lives and, in the case of police Officer Eric Talley, as he did his job by responding to reports of a man with a gun shooting up a grocery store.

On Tuesday, police identified one suspect, 21-year-old Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa of the Denver suburb of Arvada, whom they said had been charged with 10 counts of murder. But again, they had yet to determine a motive.

We've gotten to the point where we have a code phrase for the obligatory but meaningless public reactions of political leaders: "thoughts and prayers," the "gesundheit" for this common affliction—gun death—a violence so routine we even have linguistic rituals for it.

Such mass killing incidents are a minor part of our quotidian encounters with gun violence. Yet, Boulder's atrocity was the second in a week, following hard on the heels the murder spree at Atlanta-area spas in which six of eight victims were Asian women. And it reminded us of Colorado's grim history of mass killings, including the 2009 Columbine High School massacre and the 2012 massacre of moviegoers in Aurora, both also in the Denver area.

More common are mass shootings in which at least four people are wounded—11 of those have occurred around the country in the past week, killing 27 and wounding 39 others, according to the Gun Violence Archive. Then there are the run-of-the-mill acts of gun violence that happen multiple times per hour. As of Tuesday morning, the Gun Violence Archive recorded 4,123 people shot dead in the U.S. since the start of the year. That doesn't include the 5,412 people who shot themselves to death.

So by the 82nd day of the calendar year, at least 9,535 people have died by gunfire here in the U.S.

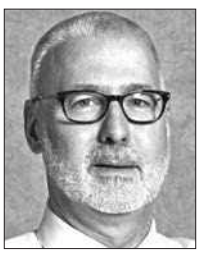
This is America's enduring, persistent, gut-wrenching, soul-searing and devastating reality. This is where we are in America today. And yesterday. And last year. And the year

See GUN on Next Page

Definitely not for thee

By KEITH C. BURRIS
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Keith C. Burris is editor, vice president and editorial director of Block Newspapers. Email: kburris@post-gazette.com.



Free speech, and so free thought, is under threat in America today.

We are not committed to it.

Free speech means nothing if it does not apply to people and ideas that upset us.

The doctrine of free speech is something like this: The people we most need to hear from are the people we least want to hear from.

But these days we are defining free speech and thought down and defining disagreement up.

Most political and cultural disagreement is now considered to be upsetting and divisive, rather than interesting and constructive. We Americans are no longer much interested in exploring each other's minds and backgrounds. We are far more interested in defending our pet assumptions and prejudices.

Differing views therefore often create the feeling of being discomforted, even unsafe.

National Review writer Kevin D. Williamson was hired by *The Atlantic* magazine some months ago, presumably in the interest of intellectual diversity. When it became clear that, in his new home, he would continue to be himself and take positions quite at odds with most of *The Atlantic* family, and in his own voice, the office outrage was palpable and the Twitter mob descended. He had to be unhired within days of his hiring.

Andrew Sullivan left *New York* magazine saying: "A critical mass of the staff and management at New York Magazine and Vox Media no longer want to associate with me." He said fellow staffers believed his columns were "physically harming" them. His sin? Though a classical liberal on many issues and generally Democratic in his politics, he dubs himself a conservative, and is conservative on such matters as immigration, religion, and gender.

So, disagreement equals discomfort, which requires separation.

But discomforting disagreements may also be cast as "hate speech," and therefore verbal assault: Suppose a person walks into a gathering of the self-anointed virtuous, maybe even an "inclusive" church, and mentions that he is a member of the NRA, protests at an abortion clinic each Saturday and voted for Donald Trump. He might be viewed as more than discomforting. He might be viewed as disturbing and perhaps threatening. He might well be asked to leave.

How about a Biden supporter at a "praise" church? Or a person in a "Black Lives Matter" T-shirt in a rural Ohio or Pennsylvania greasy spoon? How would they be welcomed?

This sort of sensitivity—elevating disagreement to threat—was almost unheard of 50 years ago, when the country was more easygoing and people had a sense of proportion and humor about politics.

A friend of mine recently saw what he thought had been an up-'til-then pleasant date end abruptly. "You are too conservative for me," the woman said. She left a small tip and exited, stage left.

Are relationships to be subjected to political litmus tests now? So much for Tracy and Hepburn in "Adam's Rib" in which Tracy's penultimate line is "vive la difference." So much for James Carville and Mary Matalin, in real life. And so much for two equally great Americans and jurists, Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, whose affection for each other, opera and travel transcended their disagreements about everything else.

I want to live in an America in which affection transcends politics.

If one is more than the sum of his words and thoughts, and assumes this is true of others, he can love a man, as my Dad did his brother and his brother loved him, and think his politics daft.

But many, maybe most, of my fellow Americans currently disagree.

I have "blue" friends who not only will not contemplate living in a red state but will not vacation in one. I have "red" friends who say California and New York are Gomorrah and ought to secede from the union. They will not willingly travel to either.

A hard-core Trumper, maybe even a soft-core one, will tell you that that no mercy will be shown Joe Biden: He's senile. He's a dupe of the left. He gets no honeymoon, no chance, no assumption of goodwill from us. He's not my president. "We will mess him up at every turn and create social as well as political havoc."

By the way, that's speech. It may be mean, stupid, unpatriotic and irresponsible. But it is protected.

See DEFINITELY on Next Page

COVID relief bill: Bad policy, bad faith

Joe Biden has signed what may well end up being the biggest accomplishment of his presidency, an enormous $1.9 trillion COVID relief bill.

With his other priorities likely to molder in the Senate, the spending will probably stand as a signature statement of Biden's approach to governance—and it should be a damning one.

The legislation is a misnomer; it is neither a COVID nor a relief bill. Only a tiny portion of the spending in the bill goes toward vaccinations and other priories directly related to the pandemic.

Much of the rest of the spending is not well-suited, or even designed, to respond to current economic conditions, which are increasingly favorable.

Democrats are telling themselves that it's like 1933, when we were in the midst of a depression, whereas it's more like 1983, when we were coming out of a punishing recession.

Or to put it another way, the Biden bill is reacting to the wrong spring. It is no longer the cataclysmic spring of 2020, with the economy shuttered and nothing to fight the virus except social distancing and masks, but the much more hopeful spring of 2021, with the economy opening back up, COVID cases steeply declining and vaccinations ramping up massively.

Jobless claims have decreased, and personal incomes are higher than when the pandemic started. Both the Congressional Budget Office and Goldman Sachs are projecting rapid economic growth in 2021. As states open back up, nearly 20% of the U.S. population has received at least one vaccination shot.

This isn't to say that all is well. There is an estimated $420 billion hole in the economy, although, as even center-left critics of the bill have noted, you don't need a $1.9 trillion bill to fill it.

The latest bout of spending is spread around willy-nilly on Democratic priorities and constituencies.

Take public education, where Democratic-allied teacher unions dominate. It's not clear why any additional spending is necessary, given that tens of billions of education funding from prior COVID relief bills are still unspent, even as many districts have already begun to reopen for in-person instruction.

Nonetheless, the bill spends roughly another $130 billion on K-12 education, which will be spread out over years. The CBO projects more spending for elementary and secondary education will occur in fiscal year 2026 than this fiscal year.

The $350 billion in aid to states and localities comes despite state and local tax revenue being down only a tick through much of 2020 compared with the year before. According to widely cited Moody's economist Mark Zandi, the state and local funding gap will be roughly $60 billion through fiscal 2022. Still, states and localities will be showered with money, after more than $500 billion in aid to states and localities last year.

The bill spends $86 billion bailing out union-negotiated multiemployer pension plans.

Transportation gets tens of billions of new spending, which by its nature doesn't happen quickly, and more than $30 billion goes to expanding Obamacare, a long-term Democratic policy goal.

By RICH LOWRY
(c) 2021 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

It's doubtful that the checks of $1,400 to individuals are necessary; it is more supply—i.e., businesses being closed or supply chains disrupted—than demand that is hampering the economy now.

The continued elevated unemployment payments make unemployment more lucrative than employment for many people, and will discourage a return to work at the margins.

For all that, the bill is popular. From where Biden sits, why not spend as much as possible under the rubric of "COVID relief"? To paraphrase Rahm Emanuel, a pandemic is a terrible thing to waste.

Assuming the bill doesn't cause some disastrous unintended consequence, it will allow Biden to take credit for a roaring economic recovery that is already building.

This might be shrewd politics, but it is not evidence-based or bipartisan governance. It's getting while the getting is good, and assuming that no one will notice.

A crisis built on good intentions

When he was running for president in 2016, Donald Trump said he was going to build a 1,000-mile concrete wall, maybe 30 feet high, on the southern border, and that Mexico would pay for it. The idea, meant to halt gobs of illegal immigration, was outlandish, empty-headed and abandoned.

Instead, Trump admired his success in almost completing 450 miles of a wall that wasn't much of a wall and 200 miles shorter in length than a wall finished in the Obama years. The wall's potency is doubted, but Trump did in fact fix things to the point that it took the election of President Joe Biden to institute a fresh, inhumane, dangerous border crisis.

To start with, Biden made a move not as foolish as Trump's dream of a wall, but close. He called for a bill legalizing America's 11 million (maybe 22 million) illegal immigrants and offering them a path to citizenship. Despite complicating details, this is an invitation for excruciating numbers to come running, and that's not just me talking, but a student of the subject at the Heritage Foundation.

Biden also tried to put a 100-day stop on Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents initiating the deportation of criminally involved illegal immigrants. A federal judge, caring about law and public safety, said no, and so the Biden team toned it down a bit, saying ICE could act in cases of murder, rape and recent crossings, but not much else.

Significantly, Biden ended Trump's deal to keep those claiming to be refugees on the Mexican side of the border until judges were available. What he did as an alternative was restart catch and release, a policy setting thousands free with no judicial ruling. That meant they could maybe disappear for good after first invading small Texas cities in no way prepared to deal with them.

Put it all together with other goofs and guess what you get? Just this: a migrant surge that could be a 20-year high with 100,000 last month pouring in, many of them children coming by themselves.

These young ones, some wearing Joe Biden T-shirts, are being placed in detention centers in which, for a period, no reporters were allowed, and surely no photos. It's nevertheless known that resources to take care of them are insufficient, and a recent Associated Press report said 10% of immigrant children in a West Texas camp were infected with COVID-19. Border guards have had to quit guarding the border to lend a hand and themselves risk infection.

To get to the border, these victims of supposed compassion mainly trek through the desert, women and girls often raped along the way. For phenomenal prices, gangsters often serve as guides, some of them toting drugs that will kill vast numbers of Americans and some of them human traffickers.

It's often assumed that people worried about undocumented immigrants are against immigration generally. I am absolutely for legal immigration, though with more emphasis on skills our country badly needs and less on relatives. We should also take refugees judicially validated in their home countries; no one crosses the border without a passport. I am for citizenship possibilities for hard-working, long-term illegal immigrants once our borders are adequately protected and we've put an end to those illegally overstaying their visas.

Trump, by the way, never got Mexico to pay for any wall, but he did get them to invest large sums of money in meticulously guarding their own southern border to prevent marches northward along with harboring refugees. We need the same kind of cooperation from progressives. They must understand the danger of opening the gates to everyone who wants to come here—some 750 million people according to Gallup polls—and get it that good intentions should be accompanied by realism.

By JAY AMBROSE
Tribune News Service

Jay Ambrose is an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service. Readers may email him at speaktojay@aol.com.

GUN

From Page 8

before and for damn sure where we in America will be tomorrow and for the foreseeable future. Because all of our outrage combined has not been enough to move political leaders and policymakers to act for the public good.

Yet that is our constant tension. The man police allege perpetrated the Boulder massacre exercised what some Americans consider their Second Amendment right to walk around armed with a lightweight semiautomatic rifle. And they allege he used that weapon to commit horrific crimes, putting the lie to the Declaration of Independence's notion that we are all entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That guarantee apparently comes with an asterisk: It only applies if we can outrun a bullet.

There are no persuasive Second Amendment arguments that overcome the reality that, with an estimated 400 million guns in circulation in the United States, we all must live with some degree of risk of getting shot. Congress is once again working through a menu of bills that would mandate background checks for nearly all transfers of firearms, close a loophole that allows gun sales to proceed if a background check isn't finished within three days, and ban combat-style semiautomatic rifles—so-called assault weapons. Those are basic, common-sense moves in the right direction, yet Second Amendment fetishists won't concede an inch, so even baby steps appear to be beyond us.

So here we are again. Still.

(c)2021 the Los Angeles Times

DEFINITELY

From Page 8

Which brings me to point No. 2: There really is a slippery slope to canceled speech and canceled history.

If Winston Churchill, both Roosevelts and Thomas Jefferson, along with Dr. Seuss are canceled, no one is safe.

No one will ever be pure enough.

Pick a good guy, pick a hero—John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington—they all, all, had fatal flaws.

Human beings err. Great men and women have blind spots, fallow times, dark times.

What the cancel culture cannot see is that eventually, everyone gets gone. For if flaws in the good guys mean they must be erased, those of us who are more flawed and less gifted will surely not be spared.

And there will be someone who says "free speech for me but not thee—definitely not thee," for each and every one of us.

There is a moral ground for free speech and we must till and tend it: It is the assumption of goodwill, comity, listening and a sense of fair play—four sides of humility.

For empiricists and historians, the necessity of a humble and open mind is the fickle nature of all times, trends and passing wisdom.

For the classical liberal, it is the marketplace of ideas: There are no ultimate truths so we must keep seeking, debating, learning and refining.

For the classical conservative, there are ultimate truths, like God, decency, loyalty, bravery and tradition. But these can only be revealed and defended in the arena—in the contest of words, ideas and leadership.

But left and right today are united in their illiberality, their intolerance and their arrogance. Both sides wish to live in echo chambers, be only with people like themselves, have their own facts and, indeed, their own journalism and history, which affirm their tribal oaths.

How do we till the ground for free speech?

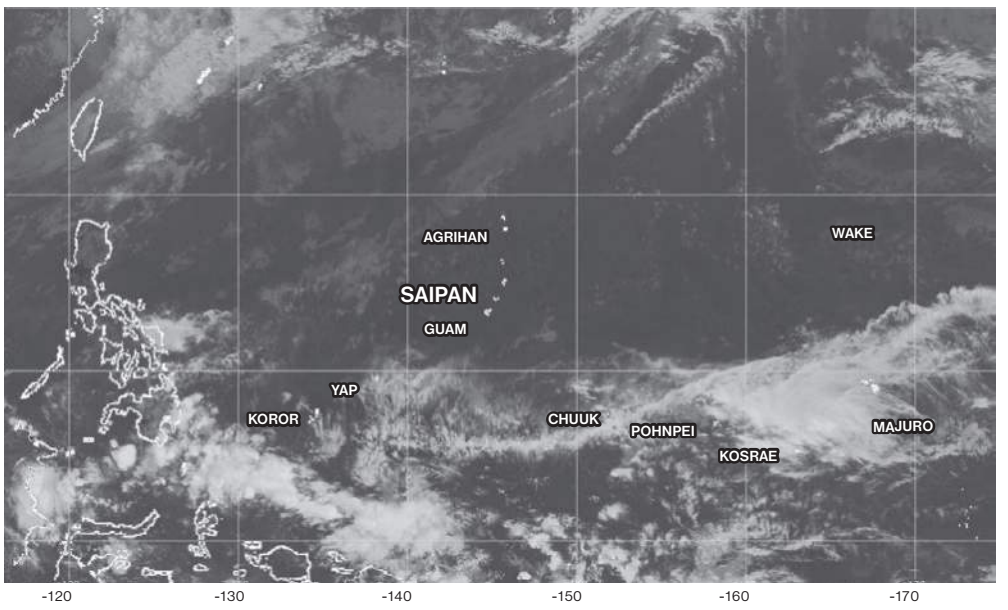
Let the other guy speak. Assume he loves the country, too. Respect the things that he knows that you may not. Listen awhile. Let affection trump opinion.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 10:05 AM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Visible satellite imagery shows partly cloudy skies and isolated showers moving through the Marianas waters. The buoys reveal combined seas of 5 to 7 feet composed of a north-northeast swell and an east-northeast swell.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Clear	87 | 78 °F
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	81 | 77 °F
Yap	Rain	83 | 72 °F
Chuuk	Overcast	87 | 79 °F
Pohnpei	Rain	82 | 78 °F
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86 | 79 °F
Majuro	Overcast	89 | 73 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:17 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:17 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:16 AM	6:28 PM
Sunday	6:15 AM	6:28 PM
Monday	6:14 AM	6:29 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:29 AM	3:07 PM
Friday	-	4:17 AM	4:06 PM
Saturday	-	5:03 AM	5:04 PM
Sunday	-	5:48 AM	6:03 PM
Monday	-	6:32 AM	7:02 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Clear	75 | 65 °F
Beijing	Clear	62 | 44 °F
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	84 | 71 °F
Honolulu	Clear	84 | 71 °F
London	Scattered Clouds	48 | 39 °F
Los Angeles	Overcast	66 | 57 °F
Manila	Partly Cloudy	89 | 77 °F
Melbourne	Overcast	68 | 57 °F
Miami	Clear	82 | 65 °F
New York	Overcast	56 | 36 °F
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	52 | 41 °F
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	55 | 40 °F
Pusan	Clear	62 | 38 °F
Rome	Fog	64 | 48 °F
Salem	Scattered Clouds	57 | 47 °F
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	58 | 54 °F
Seoul	Clear	59 | 34 °F
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	56 | 39 °F
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	47 | 34 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
6:14 AM	High Tide	1.72
11:38 AM	Low Tide	1.10
4:28 PM	High Tide	1.63
11:40 PM	Low Tide	-0.07

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769.
E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 5, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 5, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1, 5 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 5, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

Sweet & Salty: No better combination

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sweet & Salty's waffles and chicken wings. MARK RABAGO

Sweet & Salty is located at Kada Dia beside the U.S. Post Office in Chalan Kanoa. MARK RABAGO

Get to taste the opposite ends of the gastronomic spectrum whenever you visit Sweet & Salty at Kada Dia.

Marie Del Carmen, Anthony Aguon, Jaypee Paniza, and another partner opened the latest addition to Kada Dia's cadre of food stalls last January, specializing in sweet and savory snacks and refreshing drinks.

"Why Sweet & Salty? It's just something we thought of as we wanted to combine food and drinks. It's like a mix-match of food. Example, you get waffles and chicken wings—it's a perfect combination!" they said.

Aside from those two snack staples, Sweet & Salty also offers them as standalone items as well as chicken wings and fries, beef nachos with cheese, and, of course, everyone's favorite, French fries.

For drinks, Sweet & Salty has smoothies (mango, strawberry, pandan), frappuccino (mocha, caramel, cookies and cream, chocolate chip, vanilla, green tea), and coffee (mocha, French vanilla, caramel, café latte). They also have peach iced tea, blue lemonade, bottled water, and assorted soda for good measure.

The owners said they stumbled on Kada Dia across the leadership kiosku in Chalan Kanoa quite by accident. "We opened in late January and we chose Kada Dia after a routine food run. Well, we went there to try Isla Shave Ice and we saw that there were different vendors selling different things and said this was a perfect spot for our food business."

Currently, Sweet & Salty's No. 1 bestsellers are its beef nachos and frappes.

For the health conscious, Sweet & Salty doesn't use a lot of oil in preparing their food, as they have a trusty air fryer to do nearly all the cooking for them.

"What makes us different from others is that everything—beside the nachos—are being cooked in an air fryer. They're also cooked upon order so the food is always hot, fresh, and tasty."

Currently, Sweet & Salty has a promotion where if you purchase any item in their snack menu, they will throw in a strawberry smoothie for free.

Sweet & Salty is located at Kada Dia beside the U.S. Post Office in Chalan Kanoa. They're open from Tuesday to Friday, 2pm-7pm, Saturdays, 10am- 6pm, and Sundays, 11am-6pm. For more information, message them through their Facebook page: Sweetandsalty Spn.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-21-020

Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of; installation of sludge dewatering equipment including the screw press skid (OFCI) for full function. The work shall include; selective demolition of existing improvements, the installation of sludge dewatering units (OFCI), shaftless auger conveyor (OFCI), installation of pressure pumps, installation of water storage tanks, and rehabilitation and modification of existing improvements, along with other miscellaneous features, for one unit at Sadog Tasi Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and one unit at Agingan WWTP. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi WWTP and Agingan WWTP. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 180 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, oeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$100.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **March 9, 2021 at 10:00 AM** (ChST) at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-21-020, Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 29, 2021, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the Unites States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A *Payment Bond* of one Hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 16, 2021 to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Westen Knudsen, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email address westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and to Marcela Tenorio, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician - marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 7, 2021 | 5:00 PM
Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center | Susupe
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666
www.cnmizoning.com

AGENDA

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of 03/03/2021 Zoning Board Meeting minutes
5. Public Comments (not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)

B. Public Hearings

1. **Conditional Use Application #2020-5819** – Huang Shun Corporation is proposing to construct a warehouse measuring 50' (L) x 32' (W) x 14'.8" (H) for its storage of Noni products. This use is classified as "Warehousing & General Wholesaling" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot EA 121 "D" in the village of Susupe. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.
2. **Conditional Use Application #2020-6075** – Smart Star Inc. dba Smart Star Carwash is proposing to renovate & occupy an existing structure measuring 65' (L) x 50'.2" (W) x 10' (H) for its car wash use. This use is classified as "Gas Station, Light Repair" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 001 I 41 in the village of San Antonio. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.
3. **Conditional Use Application #2020-5479** – Cannabis Island, LLC is proposing to renovate & occupy a portion of a unit on the 1st floor of a pre-existing 2-story building measuring 60' (L) x 114' (W) x 22' (H) for its Cannabis Retail Use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Retail" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 023 D 26 in the village of Puerto Rico. This area is zoned a Mixed Commercial.
4. **Conditional Use Application #2020-5841** – Latte Stoned, LLC is proposing to utilize two (2) cargo freight containers measuring 40' (L) x 8' (W) x 9' (H) and construct a Growing Canopy Area measuring 60' (L) x 50' (W) x 10' (H) for its Cannabis Farm use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Farm" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 1479-2-5-1 in the village of Chalan Galaide. This area is zoned as Rural.

C. New Business
1. Operations Reports (Permitting & Enforcement)

D. Miscellaneous
1. Next Meeting – May 5th
2. Other Matters

E. Adjournment

In an effort to provide public access to this meeting during this pandemic, the Commonwealth Zoning Board will host this meeting via:

Zoom Video Communications
Meeting Link: https://zoom.us/j/6853007492
Meeting Code: 685 300 7492

Nation

Colorado suspect got assault weapon 6 days before shooting

BOULDER, Colo. (AP)—The suspect accused of opening fire inside a crowded Colorado supermarket was a 21-year-old man who purchased an assault weapon less than a week earlier, authorities said Tuesday, a day after the attack that killed 10 people, including a police officer.

Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa bought the weapon on March 16, just six days before the attack at a King Soopers store in Boulder, according to an arrest affidavit. It was not immediately known where the gun was purchased.

Alissa, who is from the Denver suburb of Arvada, was booked into the county jail Tuesday on murder charges after being treated at a hospital. He was due to make a first court appearance Thursday.

Investigators have not established a motive, but they believe Alissa was the only shooter, Boulder County District Attorney Michael Dougherty said.

A law enforcement official briefed on the shooting said the suspect's family told investigators they believed Alissa was suffering some type of mental illness, including delusions. Relatives described times when Alissa told them people were following or chasing him, which they said may have contributed to the violence, the official said. The official was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

The attack was the nation's deadliest mass shooting since a 2019 assault on a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas, where a gunman killed 22 people in a rampage that police said targeted Mexicans.

In Washington, President Joe Biden called on Congress to tighten the nation's gun laws.

"Ten lives have been lost, and more families have been shattered by gun violence in the state of Colorado," Biden said at the White House.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer vowed to bring forward two House-passed bills to require expanded background checks for gun buyers. Biden supports the measures, but they face a tougher route to passage in a closely divided Senate with a slim Democratic majority.

The shooting came 10 days after a judge blocked a ban on assault rifles passed by the city of Boulder in 2018. That ordinance and another banning large-capacity magazines came after the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, that left 17 people dead.

A lawsuit challenging the bans was filed quickly, backed by the National Rifle Association. The judge struck down the ordinance under a Colorado law that blocks cities from making their own rules about guns.

Supermarket employees told investigators that Alissa shot a man multiple times outside the Boulder grocery store before going inside, according to the affidavit. Another person was found shot in a vehicle next to a car registered to the suspect's brother.

The gunfire sent terrorized shoppers and employees scrambling for cover. SWAT officers carrying ballistic shields slowly approached the store while others escorted frightened people away from the building, which had some of its windows shattered. Customers and employees fled through a back loading dock to safety. Others took refuge in nearby shops.

Multiple 911 calls paint a picture of a chaotic, terrifying scene, according to the affidavit.

One caller said the suspect opened fire out the window of his vehicle. Others called to say they were hiding inside the store as the gunman fired on customers. Witnesses described the shooter as having a black AR-15-style gun and wearing blue jeans and maybe body armor.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Cannabis Island, LLC

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Cannabis Island, LLC is proposing to renovate & occupy a portion of a unit on the 1st floor of a pre-existing 2-story building measuring 60' (L) x 114' (W) x 22' (H) for its Cannabis Retail Use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Retail" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 023 D 26 in the village of Puerto Rico. This area is zoned a Mixed Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Huang Shun Corporation

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Huang Shun Corporation is proposing to construct a warehouse measuring 50' (L) x 32' (W) x 14'.8" (H) for its storage of Noni products. This use is classified as "Warehousing & General Wholesaling" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot EA 121 "D" in the village of Susupe. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Latte Stoned, LLC

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Latte Stoned, LLC is proposing to utilize two (2) cargo freight containers measuring 40' (L) x 8' (W) x 9' (H) and construct a Growing Canopy Area measuring 60' (L) x 50' (W) x 10' (H) for its Cannabis Farm use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Farm" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 1479-2-5-1 in the village of Chalan Galaide. This area is zoned as Rural.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Smart Star Inc. dba Smart Star Carwash

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Smart Star Inc. dba Smart Star Carwash is proposing to renovate & occupy an existing structure measuring 65' (L) x 50'.2" (W) x 10' (H) for its car wash use. This use is classified as "Gas Station, Light Repair" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 001 I 41 in the village of San Antonio. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

Biden expands 'Obamacare' by cutting health insurance costs

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—President Joe Biden pledged Tuesday that his $1.9 trillion rescue package would build on the promise of the Affordable Care Act, the hallmark legislation of Barack Obama's presidency that became law 11 years ago.

Biden's COVID-19 relief law pumps up "Obamacare" premium subsidies to address longstanding problems of affordability, particularly for people with middle-class incomes. More taxpayer assistance means, in effect, that consumers who buy their own policies through HealthCare.gov will pay hundreds of dollars less out of their own pockets.

"We have a duty not just to protect it, but to make it better and keep becoming a nation where health care is a right for all, not a privilege for a few," Biden said at the James Cancer Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. "Millions of families will be able to sleep a little more soundly at night because they don't have to worry about losing everything if they get sick."

Biden's speech in the capital of a political battleground state is part of a mini-blitz by the White House to highlight the relief package. Newly minted Health Secretary Xavier Becerra will echo Biden's comments Tuesday in Carson City, Nevada, and join a Florida-themed Zoom event. Second gentleman Douglas Emhoff will pitch the aid in Omaha, Nebraska.

Yet events interrupted the push, as Biden needed to also address a mass shooting in Boulder, Colorado, that left 10 people dead. He spoke about the shooting and need for background checks before leaving for Ohio. And while touring a cancer center in Columbus, Biden was asked if he had the political capital to move forward on new gun control measures.

"I hope so," said Biden, crossing his fingers. "I don't know. I haven't done any counting yet."

On health care, the numbers suggest that consumers' fears about medical costs could be eased by the new rescue package.

The COVID-19 legislation cuts premiums paid by a hypothetical 64-year-old making $58,000 from $1,075 a month to about $413, based on Congressional Budget Office estimates. A 45-year-old making $19,300 would pay zero in premiums as compared with about $67 on average before the law. People who have even a brief spell of unemployment this year can get a standard plan for zero premium and reduced copays and deductibles.

Asia

Myanmar junta defends crackdown, accuses Suu Kyi of graft

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's military junta on Tuesday took the offensive to try to justify last month's coup and subsequent actions against those opposed to it, even as street demonstrations continued against the takeover.

At a news conference in the capital Naypyitaw, the military presented a video of a former political colleague of ousted national leader Aung San Suu Kyi claiming he had handed over large amounts of cash and gold to her personally, in what the military has characterized as corruption. Such allegations were previously denied by her lawyer.

Many of the protests Tuesday were staged in a way that avoided confrontations with authorities, who have not hesitated to use lethal force to break up demonstrations. Some marches were held before dawn in Yangon, the country's biggest city, and elsewhere and went unmolested. Other protests adopted the tactic of having signboards or other inanimate objects lined up in the street to serve as proxies for human demonstrators.

The independent Assistance Association for Political Prisoners has verified 261 protesters' deaths nationwide but says the actual total, including cases where verification has been difficult, is probably much higher. It said 2,682 people have also been arrested or charged since the coup, with 2,302 still detained or sought for arrest.

In its news conference, the military presented displays of seized homemade weapons and videos of street battles to argue that the demonstrators are violent and that its efforts to stop them are justified. However, in the weeks since the Feb. 1 coup, protesters only began using organized violence after more than 100 demonstrators had been shot dead by police and soldiers.

The allegations against Suu Kyi made by former Yangon Chief Minister Phyo Min Thein were first mentioned by the military several weeks ago. Last week the military-controlled Myawaddy TV station aired a similar video with a construction magnate who also claimed to have made large payoffs to Suu Kyi. That video was replayed at Tuesday's news conference.

No supporting evidence for the allegations has been offered, and they are generally dismissed as an effort by the military to frame Suu Kyi so she can be discredited and tried on a serious criminal charge. She is already being held on several more minor charges.

A report in the state-controlled Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper on Tuesday said the junta has expressed fresh concern about civil servants, teachers and medical workers joining the Civil Disobedience Movement that is the vanguard group opposing last month's military takeover.

The report referred to the opposition group as CDM, the initials by which it is popularly known. The group encourages employees of key enterprises, such as government offices, to stay away from work.

In what was a relatively conciliatory tone compared with earlier threats, the junta at its Monday meeting was reported to have described failing to show up at work as "not a crime but a violation of the civil service disciplines." It said that for first offenses, civil servants would have to sign confessions, but further offenses would be dealt with according to civil service rules.

Previously, government employees have been detained for joining the CDM, and striking state railway workers have been kicked out of their government-supplied housing if they don't agree to go back to work.

Philippine High Court condemns the killings of lawyers and judges

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine Supreme Court on Tuesday condemned the alarming number of killings and threats against lawyers and judges. One legal group has said these attacks are considerably higher under President Rodrigo Duterte compared to the past 50 years under six former presidents.

The 15-member high court asked lower courts, law enforcement agencies and lawyers and judges' groups to provide information about such attacks in the last 10 years, in order for the court to take preemptive steps. The attacks, it said, endanger the rule of law in an Asian bastion of democracy.

"To threaten our judges and our lawyers is no less than an assault on the judiciary. To assault the judiciary is to shake the very bedrock on which the rule of law stands," the high court said in a rare, strongly-worded censure of the attacks. "This cannot be allowed in a civilized society like ours."

The court said it would not "tolerate such acts that only perverse justice, defeat the rule of law, undermine the most basic of constitutional principles and speculate on the worth of human lives."

The Free Legal Assistance Group, a prominent group of lawyers, said at least 61 lawyers have been killed in the five years of Duterte's presidency compared to at least 25 lawyers and judges slain under six presidents since 1972, when dictator Ferdinand Marcos placed the Philippines under martial law.

Lawyers' groups said the court's denunciation was long overdue but nevertheless welcomed it. "We have been sounding out the clarion call and providing information and concrete recommendations for the longest time," said lawyer Edre Olalia, who heads the left-wing National Union of People's Lawyers.

A number of lawyers who represented suspected drug dealers or were linked to the illegal drug trade were among those gunned down under Duterte's rule. When he took office in mid-2016, Duterte launched a massive anti-drug crackdown that has left more than 6,000 mostly petty suspects dead and alarmed Western governments and human rights groups.

The brash-talking Duterte, a former government prosecutor, has denied ordering the killings of drug suspects, but has repeatedly threatened suspects with death and ordered law enforcement to shoot suspects who threaten them. Military and police officers have also been suspected of carrying out attacks and threatening lawyers and judges perceived as supportive of communist guerrillas.

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY
†Vicente (Ben) Cabrera Attao
JULY 19, 1952 - MARCH 26, 2020
We, the family of the late †Vicente Cabrera Attao - lovingly known as "Ben," would like to invite all our relatives and friends to join us in the Eucharistic Celebration as we commemorate the First Anniversary of our beloved Father, Grandfather, Great Grandfather, Son, Brother, Brother-in-Law, and Uncle passing unto eternal life.
Daily mass will be held at Mount Carmel Cathedral beginning March 18 - March 26, 2021 at 6:00am.
On Sunday, March 21st, Mass is at 9:00am.
Your presence, thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.
May our Lord bless each of you.
Un dangkulu na Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Hiimaqis Qe'ciyew'yew.
Wife: Elizabeth Arthur Attao
Children: Ina Attao — Juanda (Karl Ada), Naomi, John Vincent Camacho and Vicente Leon Guerrero,
Kristine Attao — Kristina (Drew Waits - Roman and William), Samuel, James Jr. and Elizabeth Greene,
Catherine Attao and Mark Toves — Joseph Attao, Markel, Theresa, Merrick
and Markus Toves and Raymond Mercado (Davana and Heikuaonaiki)
Sisters: Celina A. Concepcion & Aldebert Concepcion and Family, Maria Ramona "Marlene" A. & Ricardo Balajadia and Family
Extended Family: Florencia Gacutan (Ronald Miraflor) and children

World

Missteps could mar long-term credibility of AstraZeneca shot

AP
In this Monday, March 8, 2021 file photo, a health worker shows the media how she prepares a dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine to be administered to a patient at a vaccination center set up in front of Rome's Termini central station.

LONDON (AP)—AstraZeneca's repeated missteps in reporting vaccine data coupled with a blood clot scare could do lasting damage to the credibility of a shot that is the linchpin in the global strategy to stop the coronavirus pandemic, potentially even undermining vaccine confidence more broadly, experts say.

The latest stumble for the vaccine came Tuesday, when American officials issued an unusual statement expressing concern that AstraZeneca had included "outdated information" when it reported encouraging results from a U.S. trial a day earlier. That may have provided "an incomplete view of the efficacy data," according to the statement.

AstraZeneca responded that the results, which showed its shot was about 79% effective, included information through Feb. 17 but appeared to be consistent with more up-to-date data. It promised an update within 48 hours.

An independent panel that oversees the study scolded the company in a letter Monday for cherry-picking data, according to a senior administration official. The panel wrote to AstraZeneca and U.S. health leaders that it was concerned the company chose to use data that was outdated and potentially misleading instead of the most recent findings, according to the official, who discussed the contents on the condition of anonymity given the sensitivity of the matter.

"This will likely cause more vaccine hesitancy," said Dr. Paul Hunter, a professor of medicine at the University of East Anglia.

Even if the damage is limited to AstraZeneca itself, it would have far-reaching effects since the shot is cheaper and easier to store than many of its rivals' and thus is expected to be widely used in the developing world. International health agencies have repeatedly said the vaccine is safe and effective, but it's not the first time the company has run into problems with public trust.

Partial results from its first major trial—which Britain used to authorize the vaccine—were clouded by a manufacturing mistake that researchers didn't immediately acknowledge. Insufficient data about how well the vaccine protected older people led some countries to initially restrict its use to younger populations before reversing course. U.S. officials suspended an AstraZeneca study for an unusual six weeks while they sought details about problems reported in Britain before deciding the vaccine wasn't to blame. Meanwhile, the European Union has complained about delays in vaccine deliveries from the company.

Then last week, more than a dozen countries temporarily halted their use of the AstraZeneca shot after reports of rare blood clots in some people who received it. The European Medicines Agency concluded the shot did not increase the overall incidence of clots, but the unwanted attention appears to have left a mark.

In Norway, a top official warned Monday it might not be able to resume its use of the vaccine because so many people were rejecting it.

"People clearly say that they do not want the AstraZeneca vaccine," Marte Kvittum Tangen, who heads a Norwegian doctors' association, told broadcaster NRK.

Last week in Bucharest, Romania, vaccination coordinator Valeriu Gheorghita said 33,000 AstraZeneca immunization appointments had been canceled in 24 hours and that about a third of the 10,000 people scheduled to receive the vaccine did not show up. In Belgrade, Serbia, a sprawling exhibition center set up for people to get the AstraZeneca vaccine was mostly deserted on Monday.

No clear winner in Israeli election, signaling more deadlock

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli parliamentary elections on Tuesday resulted in a virtual deadlock for a fourth time in the past two years, exit polls indicated, leaving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with an uncertain future and the country facing the prospect of continued political gridlock.

The exit polls on Israel's three main TV stations indicated that both Netanyahu and his religious and nationalist allies, along with a group of anti-Netanyahu parties, both fell short of the parliamentary majority required to form a new government. That raised the possibility of an unprecedented fifth consecutive election later this year.

The election was seen as a referendum on Netanyahu's polarizing leadership style, and the initial results showed that the country remains as deeply divided as ever, with an array of small sectarian parties dominating the parliament.

The results also signaled a continuing shift of the Israeli electorate toward the right wing, which supports West Bank settlements and opposes concessions in peace talks with the Palestinians. That trend was highlighted by the strong showing of an ultranationalist anti-Arab religious party.

After three previous inconclusive elections, Netanyahu had been hoping for a decisive victory that would allow him to form a government with his traditional ultra-Orthodox and hard-line nationalist allies and seek immunity from corruption charges.

In an address to supporters early Wednesday, a subdued Netanyahu boasted of a "great achievement" but stopped short of declaring victory. Instead, he appeared to reach out to his opponents and called for formation of a "stable government" that would avoid another election.

"We must not under any circumstances drag the state of Israel to new elections, to a fifth election," he said. "We must form a stable government now."

By early Wednesday, updated exit polls on two channels were forecasting an evenly divided parliament. The third station gave Netanyahu's opponents a one-seat advantage.

Exit polls have often been imprecise in the past, meaning the final results, expected in the coming days, could still shift the balance of power. If the final results are in line with the exit polls, there is no guarantee that Netanyahu or his opponents will succeed in putting together a coalition.

"All three options are on the table: a Netanyahu-led government, a change coalition that will leave Netanyahu in the opposition, and an interim government leading to a fifth election," said Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute.

Several right-wing parties have vowed never to sit in a government with Netanyahu. And Naftali Bennett, a former Netanyahu ally turned harsh critic, refused to endorse either side during the campaign.

Bennett shares Netanyahu's hard-line nationalist ideology and would seem to be more likely to ultimately join the prime minister. But Bennett has not ruled out joining forces with Netanyahu's opponents.

In a speech to his supporters, Bennett declined to take sides. He vowed to promote right-wing values but also took several veiled swipes at the prime minister's leadership style.

"Now is the time for healing," he said. "The norms of the past will no longer be acceptable." He said he would move the country "from leadership that is interested in itself to a professional leadership that cares."

Bennett has indicated he will drive a hard bargain with Netanyahu, demanding senior Cabinet ministries and perhaps even a power-sharing arrangement that includes a stint as prime minister.

Brazil posts record single-day toll of 3,251 virus deaths

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—Brazil reported more than 3,000 COVID-19 deaths in a single day for the first time Tuesday amid calls for the government and the new health minister to take action to stem the nation's resurgence of coronavirus infections.

In recent weeks, Latin America's largest country has become the pandemic's global epicenter, with more deaths from the virus each day than in any other nation. Tuesday's record toll of 3,251 deaths was driven by the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil's most populous, which recorded 1,021 new deaths, far above the previous high of 713 last July.

The pandemic has brought the health systems of Brazilian states to near collapse, with hospitals watching their ICU beds fill up and stocks of oxygen required for assisted breathing dwindle. Most of the states in recent days adopted measures to restrict activity, over the fierce resistance of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

In a 4-minute presidential address on TV and radio, Bolsonaro did not comment on the new record and said Brazilians will "very soon return to normal life."

"We will make 2021 the year of the vaccination of Brazilians," Bolsonaro said, as pot-banging protests against his government erupted in major cities. "That is the mission and we will accomplish it."

Bolsonaro has consistently downplayed the severity of the pandemic, insisting the economy must be kept humming to prevent worse hardship, and he has criticized health measures imposed by local leaders. On Friday, he appealed to the Supreme Court to invalidate curfews enacted by two states and Brazil's federal district, though the top court previously ruled that governors and mayors have the power to adopt such restrictions.

Public health experts and economists have said Bolsonaro is presenting a false choice between preserving health and economic well-being.

On Tuesday, cardiologist Marcelo Queiroga was sworn in as health minister, becoming the fourth person to occupy the post since the beginning of the health crisis. He replaced active-duty army Gen. Eduardo Pazuello.

Queiroga's swearing-in was delayed a week while he divested holdings in companies in the health sector and the government sought to find a suitable position for Pazuello, Brazilian media reported.

Environment

Schmidt Ocean Institute acquires new research vessel to expand ability to explore, research the ocean

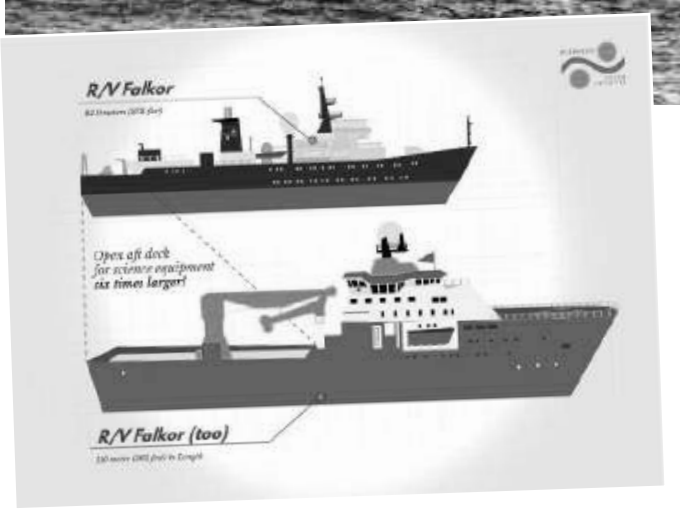
MENLO PARK, Calif.—Schmidt Ocean Institute announced it has acquired a new research vessel that will expand the organization's philanthropic science program and capability to explore the Ocean.

The new ship is significantly larger and can travel further than Schmidt Ocean Institute's existing research vessel, *Falkor*, which has been operating since 2012 and was the world's first year-round philanthropic research vessel made available for free to scientists.

The new vessel was purchased from GC Rieber Shipping ASA as the *Polar Queen* and was built in 2011 as an offshore industry vessel, used most recently to construct offshore wind farms in Europe. The new ship—re-named *Falkor (too)*—is 363 feet in length, compared to the 272-foot *Falkor*, built in 1980. The new vessel is also ice-rated and can cover more of the globe, extending Schmidt Ocean Institute's reach.

Over the past nine years, *Falkor* has mapped more than 1.25 million miles of the ocean floor, hosted more than 1,000 scientists on nearly 80 expeditions, and discovered countless new species and deep-sea bathymetry. "We are excited as we look ahead to the next decade and beyond," said Wendy Schmidt, who co-founded Schmidt Ocean Institute with her husband Eric. "This new ship will build on *Falkor*'s legacy, not only continuing but also expanding the remarkable discoveries and collaborative research made by Schmidt Ocean Institute and our science partners. With *Falkor (too)*, we will be able to host more scientists, conduct more research and explore more of our ocean as we seek to advance our understanding and protection of one of our planet's most valuable natural resources."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
The *Polar Queen*, now *Falkor (too)* before refit. Image courtesy of GC Rieber ASA.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
Side by side comparison of the *Falkor* and *Falkor (too)* research vessels.

In the coming months, the new ship will be refitted in Spain with science capabilities and the most sophisticated maritime technologies. Schmidt Ocean Institute's current science program will continue until July, and *Falkor* will then join the new vessel in Spain. The refit of *Falkor (too)* is expected to be completed by early 2022, when it will resume the organization's science program.

"*Falkor (too)* will allow us to broaden our geographical range of operations and, with more than three times the interior capacity of *Falkor* and more than six times the deck space, this vessel will meet the research needs of scientists around the world for decades to come," said Jyotika Virmani, Schmidt Ocean Institute executive director. "With 80% of the seafloor still unmapped, we will be installing a complete suite of modern mapping capabilities as part of the refit. We will also be adding state-of-the-art scientific laboratories, a high-tech on-board mission control room for our ROV SuBastian, and facilities for artists that will greatly enhance both the research capabilities as well as our outreach and artist-at-sea program next year."

Falkor was named after the Luckdragon from the 1978 German fantasy novel *The Neverending Story*. In the spirit of continuing Schmidt Ocean Institute's work, the new vessel, *Falkor (too)*, will carry on the name.

About the organization

Schmidt Ocean Institute was established in 2009 by Eric and Wendy Schmidt to advance oceanographic research through the development of innovative technologies, open sharing of information, and broad communication about ocean health. It operates Falkor, the only year-round philanthropic research vessel in the world that is made available to the international science community at no cost. For more information, visit www.schmidtocean.org. ***(PR)***

Yes, the pandemic crushed carbon emissions. Now they're back

WASHINGTON—It's not easy to move the needle on global carbon emissions—even a little bit.

But economies worldwide were so hobbled by the COVID-19 pandemic that the needle fell by 7 percent in 2020, according to a tally by the Global Carbon Project, a research network. It was the biggest percentage decline in human-generated carbon emissions ever—far more than the 1.4 percent observed after the 2008 financial meltdown.

Yet while global emissions plunged in 2020, the steepest drop happened in the spring. Emissions in many highly industrial nations, like the U.S., China and Brazil, are back to or above prepandemic levels, prompting climate scientists, government officials and energy experts to warn that last year marked a respite and bought time to solve the climate crisis.

They are preaching against complacency and predicting emissions will jump as inoculations increase. And they are warning of what lies in wait if humans do not arrest emissions to a safe degree.

"The rebound in global carbon emissions toward the end of last year is a stark warning that not enough is being done to accelerate clean energy transitions worldwide," Fatih Birol, the head of the International Energy Agency, said. "If governments don't move quickly with the right energy policies, this could put at risk the world's historic opportunity to make 2019 the definitive peak in global emissions."

With the vaccine distribution and inoculation on the rise, heat-trapping emissions are not likely far behind, as analysts with the Rhodium Group, a nonpartisan research firm, point out. "With coronavirus vaccines now in distribution, we expect economic activity to pick up again in 2021, but without meaningful structural changes in the carbon intensity of the US economy, emissions will likely rise again as well," they said.

A U.N. environmental report said the pandemic was a blip: "The immediate reduction in emissions is expected to have a negligible long-term impact on climate change."

Addressing the U.N. Security Council in late February, John Kerry, special climate envoy for the Biden administration, didn't even mention the pandemic in a 1,298-word speech, instead focusing on the destabilizing security risks that will plague a hotter world.

Kerry, a former Democratic senator from Massachusetts, attended the so-called Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, a seminal gathering that established climate diplomacy.

To climate veterans like him, the global health crisis has been a stopgap measure to address the more threatening environmental crisis.

"We bury our heads in the sand at our own peril," Kerry said. "It is time to start treating the climate crisis like the urgent security threat that it is."

The Biden administration and congressional Democrats have made climate change an early priority. President Joe Biden invoked climate change in his inaugural address, saying the Earth is in crisis and "the cry for survival comes from the planet itself."

House Democrats filed a bill this month to zero out domestic greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, half of which would come by 2035. And Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., not typically known for his work on environmental topics, last month called climate change "the existential threat of our time."

At the least, the pandemic bought time.

It knocked the U.S. back on track to meet the goals of the Paris climate agreement, with domestic emissions down 20 percent from 2005 levels, according to BloombergNEF, an energy research organization.

Forces in the electricity market provide reasons to be bullish on carbon reduction. Installers in the U.S. set records in 2020 for building the most wind and solar power in a calendar year, coal-fired electricity dropped to a modern low of just 19 percent of domestic electricity production, and renewable energy sources in the country hit an all-time high mark.

"The sheer size of the accomplishment is pretty remarkable," said Ethan Zindler, head of Americas at BloombergNEF, of emissions cuts and renewables growth, adding that lowering emissions from the transportation sector —the No. 1 source of greenhouse gases coming from America – will require government intervention. "Transportation will not necessarily get there without new policies and regulations."

The pandemic, which last March and April ushered in eerily quiet streetscapes, empty highways, clear skies and office parks and city centers that resembled ghost towns, led to jaw-dropping energy stats.

Imagine removing all the European Union's emissions.

That's the equivalent of what occurred, IEA said in March. Such a sharp plummet has never happened, IEA said. "Broadly speaking, this is the equivalent of removing all of the European Union's emissions from the global total," the IEA said.

Worldwide, carbon pollution from energy-related sources dropped 5.8 percent, IEA said.

In the U.S., energy consumption fell to a 30-year low in April, emissions dropped to a record low, and emissions from oil use in the transportation sector crashed that month to their lowest point since February 1983, federal data show. Crude oil production dipped for the first time since 2016.

Traffic on all roads and streets in the country dwindled by 39.8 percent in April and by 25.5 percent in May, versus the same months of 2019, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

Overall, Americans drove 13.2 percent less in 2020 than the year before.

Life & Style

Banksy painting raises $23 million for UK health charities

LONDON (AP)—A Banksy painting honoring Britain's health workers in the pandemic has sold for a record 16.8 million pounds ($23.2 million), auction house Christie's said Tuesday. Proceeds from the sale will be used to fund health organizations and charities across the U.K., it said.

The work by the mystery street artist, titled "Game Changer," first appeared on a wall at Southampton General Hospital in southern England in May, during the first wave of the pandemic. The black-and-white picture depicts a young boy sitting on the floor playing with a nurse superhero toy, as Batman and Spiderman toy figures lie in a wastepaper basket next to him.

At the time it went up, the hospital said Banksy left a note for workers there saying: "Thanks for all you're doing. I hope this brightens the place up a bit, even if it's only black and white."

Christie's said the sale price was a world auction record for Banksy. The auction house said it will donate a "significant portion" of the buyer's premium to health organizations.

ANDREW MATTHEWS/PA VIA AP
In this May 7, 2020 file photo, a member of staff has their photograph taken in front of the artwork painted by Banksy during lockdown, entitled 'Game Changer', at Southampton General Hospital in Southampton, England.

A reproduction of the picture will stay at the hospital for patients, visitors and staff, Christie's added.

"Banksy is an extraordinary artist who is a constant barometer of nationwide sentiment," said Katharine Arnold, who heads the European post-war and contemporary art division at the auction house. "With the perfect image of a little boy playing with his superhero doll, a nurse sporting the international Red Cross, he perfectly captured the essence of this moment in time."

The sale came on the day Britain held a minute's silence to mark one year since Prime Minister Boris Johnson ordered the first national lockdown.

Meryl Streep, Mary-Louise Parker to star in spring plays

NEW YORK (AP)—Meryl Streep, Mary-Louise Parker, Audra McDonald, Kevin Klein, Carla Gugino and Keanu Reeves have signed on to perform in a new virtual play series this spring while Broadway is closed.

The series kicks off Thursday with "The Thanksgiving Play" by Larissa FastHorse, directed by Leigh Silverman starring Reeves, Bobby Cannavale, Heidi Schreck and Alia Shawkat.

Streep

The next show—on April 8—will feature "Angry, Raucous and Shamelessly Gorgeous" by Pearl Cleage directed by Camille A. Brown and starring Debbie Allen and Phylicia Rashad.

Also on tap is Lillian Hellman's "Watch on the Rhine" with Burstyn; Adrienne Kennedy's "Ohio State Murders" with McDonald; Sarah Ruhl's "Dear Elizabeth" with Streep and Kline; Paula Vogel's "The Baltimore Waltz" with Parker; and Wendy Wasserstein's "The Sisters Rosensweig" Kathryn Hahn. Dates have yet to be announced.

Recording Registry adds albums by Janet Jackson, Nas

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Janet Jackson's socially conscious album "Rhythm Nation 1814," Louis Armstrong's jazzy "When the Saints Go Marching In" and Nas' debut release "Illmatic" are among 25 recordings being inducted to the National Recording Registry.

The Library of Congress announced Wednesday that Labelle's song "Lady Marmalade" and Kool & the Gang's "Celebration" are some of the titles tapped for preservation this year. The national library chose a few more memorable titles including Kermit the Frog's "The Rainbow Connection."

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden said they received about 900 public nominations this year for recordings to add to the registry.

"The National Recording Registry will preserve our history through these vibrant recordings of music and voices that have reflected our humanity and shaped our culture from the past 143 years," Hayden said in a statement.

The library selects titles for preservation because of their cultural and historic importance to the American soundscape. The titles have to be at least 10 years old.

The registry is adding the 1941 Christmas Eve radio broadcast by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill of the United Kingdom after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Prince Harry joins coaching startup as chief impact officer

NEW YORK (AP)—Prince Harry has joined the corporate world as employee coaching and mental health firm BetterUp Inc.'s Chief Impact Officer.

Harry

Financial terms of his employment were undisclosed.

BetterUp, based in San Francisco, works with employees from companies including Mars, AB InBev and LinkedIn on coaching and mental health services.

BetterUp CEO Alexi Robichaux said the Duke of Sussex is a good fit for the company because of "his model of inspiration and impact through action."

Robichaux cited Harry's efforts founding the Invictus Games, which gives sick and injured military personnel and veterans the opportunity to compete in sports, and founding Sentebale, an Africa-based charity supporting young people affected by HIV.

Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, have been working on detangling their lives from the British royal family and are living in California. They signed a deal to create content for Netflix and are creating podcasts for Spotify.

In a blog post, Harry said he is joining BetterUp because he believes in the company's mission of being proactive about mental health.

Prince's ashes to be displayed marking 5th year of his death

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Paisley Park officials are marking the fifth anniversary of Prince's death by offering fans free admission to pay their respects at the suburban Minnesota compound, where his ashes will be on display in the atrium.

A custom-made ceramic urn shaped like Paisley Park with Prince's symbol on top was originally placed in the middle of the atrium when the legend's 65,000-square-foot studio in Chanhassen first opened as a museum in October 2016. At the request of Prince's family, the ashes were moved to a less prominent spot in the atrium and eventually removed entirely from public view, disappointing his legions of fans.

A total of 1,400 people fortunate enough to get reservations at paisleypark.com will be allowed inside on April 21 for 30-minute visits to the atrium. There will be 70 time slots available, with 20 people per slot. There will be no regular tours that day, the Minneapolis Star Tribune reported.

"We celebrate his life and legacy every day at Paisley Park, a place that Prince wanted to share with the world," Paisley Park Executive Director Alan Seiffert said in a statement. "So, on this day especially, we acknowledge the incredible force and inspiration Prince is in people's lives and open up our doors for them to pay their respects."

Widower fears impotence will kill new relationship

DEAR ABBY: I am a faithful male reader of your column. I lost my beautiful wife of 40 years last year.

During our marriage, I had prostate cancer and decided to have the surgery to remove it. I was told by my doctor that there was a chance I would never again be intimate with my wife, and she was OK with it. Now that she's gone, I have grown close to her childhood best friend. I don't know whether a relationship is in the making, but I'm afraid once she finds out I'm unable to perform, the relationship will die.

I have tried every pill on the market, pump, etc. Is it possible to have a good relationship with someone without intercourse? Or do you think I'm doomed?

GOING FORWARD IN VIRGINIA

DEAR GOING: I do NOT think you are "doomed." If you are under the impression that all women your age (and younger) would reject you because you can no longer have sexual intercourse, allow me to reassure you. Many women would value warmth, affection, compatible ethics and morals and an intellectual equal to share their life with. So be honest, and you may be pleasantly surprised to discover that not only are you eligible, but that you are also in demand.

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend who is really popular. We have been best friends since third grade, but when we started ninth grade, she really changed. She started hanging out with the "cool" kids and acting weird. She told me that because I was her friend, I had the automatic right to hang out with them.

I don't like to hang out with large groups of people because I'm afraid of big groups, but I still want to be friends with her. When I told her I'd think about it, she suddenly turned cold. I'm confused. I don't know what I should do. She was there for me since third grade, and I was there for her, and now she seems to be fading really fast—six years of friendship just forgotten. Please give me some advice.

FRIEND DRAMA IN MICHIGAN

DEAR FRIEND DRAMA: Sometimes when a person says "I'll think about it," it comes across as a negative reply. Your friend's feelings may have been hurt because she interpreted it as a rejection. It would have been better if you had explained that you are uncomfortable in large groups and would prefer to see her one-on-one if she was willing. It may not be too late to get that message across to her. If the price of her company is that you will have to learn to be more social, you will then have to decide which is more important.

DEAR ABBY: I have a co-worker who just built a house. When I asked her what she would like for a housewarming gift, she told me a nice wine carafe with a stopper. So that's exactly what I got her.

I recently found out she had a housewarming party, and I wasn't invited. I had asked her when it was going to be, and she didn't mention a word about it. Am I still obligated to give her the gift I got for her? Or should I write her off and give it to someone else?

EXCLUDED IN CORPUS CHRISTI

DEAR EXCLUDED: Ouch! Write her off and regift it.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

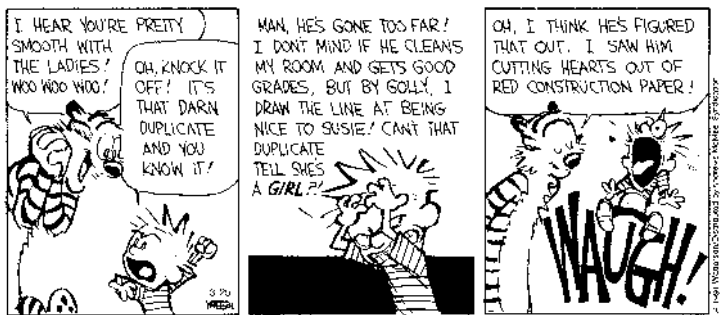
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

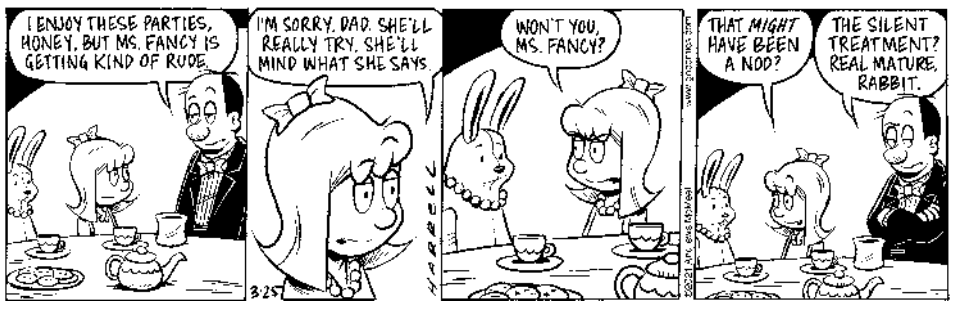

I HEAR YOU'RE PRETTY SMOOTH WITH THE LADIES! WOO WOO WOO!
OH, KNOCK IT OFF! IT'S THAT DARN DUPLICATE AND YOU KNOW IT!
MAN, HE'S GONE TOO FAR! I DON'T MIND IF HE CLEANS MY ROOM AND GETS GOOD GRADES, BUT BY GOLLY, I DRAW THE LINE AT BEING NICE TO SUSIE! CAN'T THAT DUPLICATE TELL SHES A GIRL?!
OH, I THINK HE'S FIGURED THAT OUT. I SAW HIM CUTTING HEARTS OUT OF RED CONSTRUCTION PAPER!
WAUGH!
.. And who could make MY HEART FEEL WOOZY? ONLY THOU, MY fair SWEET SUSIE.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I ENJOY THESE PARTIES, HONEY. BUT MS. FANCY IS GETTING KIND OF RUDE.
I'M SORRY, DAD. SHE'LL REALLY TRY. SHE'LL MIND WHAT SHE SAYS.
WON'T YOU, MS. FANCY?
THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A NOD?
THE SILENT TREATMENT? REAL MATURE, RABBIT.
3-25

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Girl
5 Snitch
8 Pleasing
12 Skin breakout
13 Schedule abbr.
14 Austen heroine
15 Lena of "The Reader"
16 "Give — break!"
17 Slightly open
18 Excellent
20 Division word
22 Eye candy
26 City-related
29 British ref. work
30 Mineral suffix
31 Bakery buy
32 Knight's address
33 Pantry pests
34 "I love," in Latin
35 Coop dweller
36 Washington Sound
37 Was attractive
40 Dad
41 Scoreboard count
45 Leak out slowly
47 Irish actor Stephen
49 Actress Reid
50 Andean land
51 Under the weather
52 Listending abbr.
53 Suffix with song or gab
54 "Mayday!"
55 Univ. division

DOWN

1 Asian nation
2 Rights org.
3 Use scissors
4 Mali neighbor
5 Stallone role
6 Exist
7 Movie promo
8 "Swell!"
9 "Just kidding!"
10 Nashville-based awards org.
11 Listening device
19 Harry Potter pal
21 Silent assent
23 "Nothing —!"
24 Diminutive suffix
25 Take five
26 Russian river
27 Former QB Tony
28 Outtakes, often
32 "Me Talk Pretty One Day" humorist David
33 Reviewed, as the books
35 With it, once
36 Cutesy- —
38 Beyond repair
39 October birthstones
42 — the Great (kid-lit detective)
43 Snare
44 Pretzel topper
45 Tanning lotion letters
46 Shoe width
48 "Xanadu" band

Solution time: 24 mins.

		B	O	O			H	A	S			
	C	A	P	P		T	E	S	L	A		
H	A	S	T	E		R	E	P	A	V	E	
M	A	K	I	N	G	A	L	I	V	I	N	G
O	N	S		A	N	I	S	E		A	D	A
			V	I	A				R	T	E	S
	S	K	I	R	T		S	T	E	E	D	
R	U	I	N			G	O	W	N			
E	M	T		S	A	U	D	I		T	I	P
T	A	K	I	N	G	A	S	N	O	O	Z	E
	C	A	V	I	A	R		B	A	R	O	N
		T	E	P	I	D		E	H	J	D	
			S	S	N			D	U	N		

Yesterday's answer 3-25

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				■	16			■	17			
18				19		■	20	21			■	■
■	■	■	22			23					24	25
26	27	28			■	29			■	30		
31				■	32			■	33			
34			■	35			■	36				
37			38				39			■	■	■
■	■	40				■	41			42	43	44
45	46			■	47	48		■	49			
50				■	51			■	52			
53				■	54			■	55			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jenny Slate, 39; Sarah Jessica Parker, 56; Marcia Cross, 59; Elton John, 74.

Happy Birthday: Personal growth will stir up emotions and leave you begging for something new and exciting this year. Take a closer look at what you have, and plan to update and rejuvenate rather than spend valuable time and money for the sake of change. Choose a minimalist approach to life, and you will have more time to do something worthwhile. Your numbers are 5, 13, 23, 35, 39, 44, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Indulgence will tempt you. Before you overspend, consume or overdo, think about the consequence that will follow. You can have fun without going overboard or being obsessive. Focus on self-improvement, love and doing what's best for you. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Attend a virtual networking event. The connections you make will offer plenty of suggestions that will help you rethink the best way to use your skills. It's up to you to make the first move if you want to get ahead. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Rearrange your furniture to suit your needs. Consider making a move if you've outgrown your space or it's time to downsize. A change will give you the boost you need to revitalize your life. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Don't lose sight of your dreams because someone doesn't want to share them with you. Satisfy your needs and follow the path that feels right. Expect emotional manipulation to be used if you get into a joint venture or share expenses with someone. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Do something because it interests you, not because someone is twisting your arm. Personal growth will bring excellent satisfaction and attract the attention of people who appreciate your individualism. Update your look, and compliments will follow. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Refuse to let a change of plans frustrate or anger you. Carry on about your business, and you'll be happy with what you accomplish. Nurture a meaningful relationship, but don't let anyone shadow you. Maintain equality using reason; arguing won't solve anything. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Hard work will pay off. Reach out to someone who can provide you with pertinent suggestions. Don't be lazy when it comes to fitness and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Commit to taking better care of yourself and meaningful relationships. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Indecisiveness will set in if you let emotional matters take over. Don't rule out what you have to do to find peace of mind. Putting up with something that brings you down or disrupts your life won't help. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Look for opportunities that allow you to use what you already have. Sidestep someone jealous or eager to make you look bad. Don't let anyone interfere in your domestic or love life. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Don't take a health risk or jeopardize your relationship with loved ones. The changes you want to make at home will go over budget if you don't do your homework before you begin. Plot out a course you know you can afford. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Concentrate on getting what you want. Keep anyone at a distance who is trying to tempt or mislead you. It's important to be true to yourself and your beliefs. Put your energy where it counts, and make a difference. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Do your own thing, and avoid getting into a spat with a friend/relative. Fix loose ends and put changes that will give you greater freedom to follow your dreams, hopes and wishes. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are charismatic, proactive and outgoing. You are generous and possessive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

4		5			3			6
		9		8	2			
							8	1
6	3			5				
	7						9	
				7			4	3
5	1							
			5	2		7		
7			1			4		5

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4	2	1	6	7	8	9	5	3
6	7	9	5	1	3	2	8	4
8	3	5	9	4	2	1	6	7
5	8	7	4	2	1	6	3	9
2	4	6	3	9	7	5	1	8
9	1	3	8	6	5	4	7	2
1	5	8	2	3	4	7	9	6
7	9	2	1	8	6	3	4	5
3	6	4	7	5	9	8	2	1

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

STILL DISTANCING AT HOME — Solution: 8 letters

E	C	F	C	S	C	R	A	B	B	L	E	A	D	S
J	T	O	N	A	E	L	C	A	R	D	S	I	E	Y
E	O	A	F	C	L	S	L	A	E	M	S	I	C	L
K	C	U	T	F	L	L	S	P	A	N	R	T	O	I
K	N	N	R	I	E	E	R	T	E	E	S	I	R	M
I	D	I	A	N	D	E	L	Y	S	R	T	G	A	A
N	R	N	T	D	A	E	P	E	E	X	A	N	T	F
S	O	N	X	D	G	L	M	P	E	M	L	I	E	A
T	W	O	A	O	U	A	A	T	V	E	K	M	S	C
A	R	Z	L	S	G	P	U	T	W	T	E	A	S	E
G	E	A	E	D	S	O	E	S	D	I	K	E	E	B
R	D	M	R	W	K	L	D	E	R	I	T	R	H	O
A	N	A	E	R	P	U	Z	Z	L	E	S	T	C	O
M	O	N	O	P	O	L	Y	P	E	E	L	S	E	K
B	W	W	A	N	O	I	T	C	I	R	T	S	E	R

© 2021 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 3/25

Amazon, Apple TV, Arts, Board Games, Call, Cards, Chess, Clean, Coffee, Dance, Decorate, Disney Plus, Facebook, Family, Instagram, Journa., Kids, Knit, Lego, Meals, Meditate, Monopoly, Nails, Naps, Newspapers, Puzzles, Read, Relax, Restriction, Scrabble, Series, Sleep, Snack, Streaming, Talk, Teas, Text, Tired, Twitter, Wonderword, Workout

Yesterday's Answer: Girlfriends

The NEW **Treasury 43** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Harris comes up big late as Sixers hold off Warriors

AP
Golden State Warriors center James Wiseman, right, is defended by Philadelphia 76ers guard Ben Simmons during the second half of an NBA basketball game in San Francisco, Tuesday, March 23, 2021.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The way his Philadelphia 76ers are winning, coach Doc Rivers sees no reason to discuss the trade deadline.

Tobias Harris hit a go-ahead jumper with 3:44 to play, scored another basket on the next possession and finished with 25 points and 13 rebounds to help the Sixers hold off the Golden State Warriors 108-98 on Tuesday night.

"My attitude is not to get the highlights, get the praise, it's to get the win," Rivers said.

Harris also converted a free throw on Draymond Green's technical foul with 2:47 remaining.

Rivers likes how Harris has improved from game to game.

"What I liked about his game tonight, he didn't force it, he kind of just let the game come to him," Rivers said. "And he made plays, not just with his shot but with the pass. Played phenomenal defense."

Ben Simmons added 22 points and eight rebounds for the Sixers, who pulled off their second consecutive road win after a 101-100 victory at New York on Sunday. The Eastern Conference leaders improved to 31-13 with their ninth victory in 10 games.

Pelicans 128, Lakers 111

In New Orleans, Brandon Ingram looked invigorated by the sight of some old teammates on the Lakers' bench, while Zion Williamson resembled the reliable 20-point machine he's become in his second pro season.

That spelled trouble for a Los Angles squad that has been struggling without injured stars LeBron James and Anthony Davis.

Ingram scored a season-high 36 points, Williamson had 27 points and nine rebounds, and the New Orleans Pelicans defeated the Lakers 128-111 on Tuesday night.

The 20-year-old Williamson became the first NBA player younger than 21 to score at least 20 points in 21 straight games, and he did so with his usual crowd-pleasing array of alley-oop dunks and quick, powerful drives to the hoop.

Ingram helped keep the Pelicans comfortably in front with 17 points in the third quarter, showcasing his mid-range repertoire of pull-ups, fades and turnaround jumpers — often against former Lakers teammate Kyle Kuzma.

Nuggets 110, Magic 99

In Orlando, Fla., Nikola Jokic had 28 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists for his 12th triple-double of the season, and the Denver Nuggets built a big lead before holding off the Orlando Magic 110-99 on Tuesday night.

Denver had a 24-point advantage early in the second half that was trimmed to five. But the Nuggets won their sixth consecutive road game to tie a franchise record set twice previously, most recently in 2018.

The Nuggets also won their ninth straight against the Magic and for the 16th time in 18 meetings dating to the 2003-04 season.

Denver coach Michael Malone was tearful and openly emotional before the game while talking about the 10 people killed in a grocery story by a gunman Monday in Boulder, Colorado. Malone named each of the 10 victims of a massacre that took place approximately 28 miles from downtown Denver.

He dedicated the game to the families dealing with the aftermath.

"Hopefully the players understand the tragedy that happened and what it means for us because we represent Denver, and Boulder is right there with us," Malone said. "We're still thinking of everybody and hope that Boulder stays strong."

Suns 110, Heat 100

In Miami, he last time the Phoenix Suns won seven consecutive road games, Chris Paul had yet to become an NBA All-Star, Devin Booker and Mikal Bridges were 10, and Deandre Ayton had not even started playing basketball.

That was then. The Suns are rolling now, and the Miami Heat just keep on sputtering as the trade deadline looms.

Booker scored 23 points, Ayton finished with 17 points and 16 rebounds and the Suns added to Miami's miserable stretch with a 110-100 win over the reigning Eastern Conference champions on Tuesday night.

It was Phoenix's seventh straight win on the road, the first time the Suns have had such a streak since January 2007.

Former Heat forward Jae Crowder scored 13 points, Bridges added 12 and Paul had nine assists for the Suns (29-13), who moved within two games of idle Utah for the top spot in the Western Conference.

Knicks 131, Wizards 113

In New York, Julius Randle scored 37 points to spark the New York Knicks to a 131-113 rout of the Washington Wizards on Tuesday night.

The All-Star was one of six players to finish in double figures for New York, which evened its record at 22-22. RJ Barrett scored 21, Alec Burks added 20 and Mitchell Robinson had 16 points and 11 rebounds.

"Winning is fun," Barrett said.

With its 22nd victory, New York has won one more game in 2020-21 than it did all of last season.

Even so, the Knicks are not yet planning any parades just yet.

Bradley Beal scored 22 points for the Wizards, who lost for the ninth time in 11 games.

Nets 116, Trail Blazers 112

In Portland, Ore., James Harden had 25 points and 17 assists to lead the Brooklyn Nets to a 116-112 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers on Tuesday night.

Jeff Green finished with 20 points, 15 in the first half and a pair of free throws to close it out with 4.8 seconds left. Nicolas Claxton had 16 points and nine rebounds off the bench for Brooklyn, which played without Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving.

The Nets also were nearly without Harden, who said he was close to sitting out with a sore neck. But Harden, who has played more games than anyone in the NBA since entering the league in 2009 with 871, takes great pride in being available for his team.

Enes Kanter had 19 points, 19 rebounds and six assists, while Damian Lillard had 22 points and nine assists for the Trail Blazers. Lillard and has backcourt partner McCollum had a tough night against the Nets, going to a combined 10 for 35 (28%) from the field.

Suns' Chris Paul merits mention in NBA MVP race

By TIM REYNOLDS AP
BASKETBALL WRITER

There is no definition for what makes someone the Most Valuable Player in the NBA.

If it's the best player, LeBron James should have way more than four trophies. If it's the best player on the best regular-season team, then Giannis Antetokounmpo has been the correct pick in each of the last two seasons. Of late, it's often been the leading scorer; Kevin Durant, Stephen Curry, Russell Westbrook and James Harden recently won MVPs in scoring-title seasons.

If it's the player most valuable to a contending team, a case can be made for Chris Paul.

Let's be clear: Paul is almost certainly not going to win the award this year. He's averaging 16 points and nine assists. That's not enough to move voters. The last time someone with numbers that weren't eye-popping won the MVP vote was when Steve Nash got his back-to-back trophies in 2005 and 2006. Every MVP since has averaged at least 23.8 points, and four have averaged at least 30 points.

This year's race is as wide open as it has been in years. And with no clear favorite, there will likely be even more debates about the "most valuable" part of the MVP award.

James seemed like the frontrunner, then the Los Angeles Lakers lost a few games without Anthony Davis and now James is likely out for at least a few weeks with a high ankle sprain. Philadelphia's Joel Embiid moved into that unofficial MVP favorite spot, then he got hurt, as well. Harden has been brilliant since joining Brooklyn, which means he's in the mix once again.

Denver's Nikola Jokic could win it this year. So could Portland's Damian Lillard. It would be foolish to rule Antetokounmpo out in his quest for three in a row. James, Embiid and Harden all still could be the winner. It's as wide open as it has been in years.

If one criteria — though not usually a top consideration — will be "player most valuable to a contending team," then Paul deserves a major look.

Let's start with the obvious reason. The Suns are good.

They weren't bad before Paul's arrival. Phoenix made some noise by going 8-0 in the restart bubble at Walt Disney World last summer in an ultimately futile longshot quest to make the playoffs, but this team is better than that group was—their veteran point guard being one of the big reasons why.

"He's just such a smart player, man," Philadelphia coach Doc Rivers said. "Still obviously skilled, still athletic. If you give Chris Paul a team of guys that want to follow — and that's the key, Chris can be tough, but he's with the right group, they want to follow, they want to be led — then there's no better player in the NBA for that."

They're 28-13 so far this season, second in the Western Conference entering Tuesday's game at Miami. Anything short of all-out collapse will have the Suns in the playoffs for the first time since 2010 and end the second-longest current drought in the NBA; only Sacramento, which hasn't been in a playoff game since 2006, has waited longer.

This should be no surprise. Paul's teams win.

This is his 16th season and the 14th consecutive in which Paul's team has a winning record when he plays. They don't just win, they win big: all five of Paul's teams over those past 14 seasons — the Hornets, the Los Angeles Clippers, Houston, Oklahoma City and now Phoenix — have at least a .600 winning percentage in his regular-season appearances.

Put another way, for every three games Paul plays, his teams win two of them. That's pretty good.

On Sunday, he became the sixth player to reach 10,000 assists, and either toward the end of this season or early next season—barring injury—he'll have enough points to be the first member of the 20,000-point, 10,000-assist club. James is 331 assists away from joining him.

Phoenix got Paul in a trade with Oklahoma City before the season, not deterred by the $44 million option he holds for next season, one that he's obviously going to exercise. Other teams were scared off by that or couldn't make it work while pursuing other free agents. Phoenix general manager James Jones went all-in and made the move.

"He should get the majority of the credit," James said of Jones, his former teammate in Miami and Cleveland. "He put that team together and then he pressed a button to get CP3 to Phoenix. And we all know CP3's resume. When CP3 goes to a team, they automatically become a better team."

Paul was second in the MVP voting 13 seasons ago. He was third in 2012, fourth in 2013, has been sixth or seventh three other times along the way. And he's never been to the NBA Finals, one of the few empty boxes on his resume.

No, he won't win the MVP award this year, either.

But, at minimum, he's earned a spot in the conversation.

Lawyer: Texans QB's assault suits followed blackmail attempt

HOUSTON (AP)—An attorney for Houston Texans quarterback Deshaun Watson, who's accused of sexual assault and harassment in lawsuits filed by 16 women, on Tuesday questioned the allegations against the NFL player, claiming they were made following a failed attempt to blackmail his client for $30,000.

The women, in lawsuits filed in state court in Houston, accuse Watson of exposing himself, touching them with his penis or kissing them against their will while he got a massage. All of the women who have sued Watson are either licensed massage therapists or worked in a spa or similar business.

Rusty Hardin, Watson's attorney, alleged in a statement that his legal team has "strong evidence" an accusation made by a woman they believe filed one of the lawsuits is false.

In her lawsuit, the woman alleged Watson forced her to perform oral sex during a massage in December and that she "blacked out for a few minutes from the fear" of her encounter with Watson, which left her "terrified."

Hardin alleges that in January, the woman demanded $30,000 in exchange for her "indefinite silence" for a consensual encounter she had with Watson.

Hardin provided a sworn affidavit from Bryan Burney, Watson's marketing manager, who alleged he spoke with the woman, who told him she needed to be paid for her "silence."

In his affidavit, Burney alleges he also spoke with the woman's "business manager" and told him the demand for money "was extortion."

"He responded, 'It's not extortion, it's blackmail,'" Burney said.

Hardin said the attempt to blackmail Watson "calls into question the legitimacy of the other cases as well."

Tony Buzbee, who represents the 16 women, did not immediately return a call or email seeking comment on Tuesday.

"Alleged sexual misconduct is serious. Attempting to criminalize or minimize those that speak out or step forward is wrong," Buzbee said in a statement posted Tuesday afternoon on his Facebook page.

At a news conference last week, Buzbee said the lawsuits aren't about money as the women are suing for $500 in damages, the least that can be sought in a Texas civil district court.

Buzbee said last week the cases are about "female empowerment" and the women filed their lawsuits "for one reason only, stopping further misconduct from this defendant and any others like him."

Hardin accused Buzbee of creating a "circus-like atmosphere by using social media" to publicize the lawsuits. He said that Watson recognizes that "sexual assault and harassment are not only unlawful, but morally wrong."

Hardin said that many massage therapists who have previously worked with Watson describe him as a "gentleman and a model client who never engaged in inappropriate conduct."

The two most recent lawsuits in the case were filed on Tuesday. Seven others were filed on Monday while the rest were filed last week. The lawsuits allege most of the assaults took place in Houston, while one happened in Atlanta and another in Beverly Hills, California. The first alleged assault took place in March 2020.

Buzbee has said he planned to submit evidence from several of the women to authorities but it's unclear if that has happened.

Houston police and the Harris County District Attorney's Office have declined to comment on the allegations.

The NFL has said it's investigating the allegations against Watson.

Watson is one of the league's top quarterbacks and led the NFL in yards passing last season. He signed a four-year, $156 million contract extension with the Texans last offseason, but he became unhappy with the direction of the team as Houston sunk to 4-12. Watson requested a trade in January.

AP

In this Dec. 27, 2020, file photo, Houston Texans quarterback Deshaun Watson throws a pass during an NFL football game against the Cincinnati Bengals in Houston.

BANGLADESH

From Page 20

while Barajas secured the win for Paire in the 72nd minute.

TanHoldings remained undefeated after notching another win over MP United FC, 3-0, last Sunday. MP United, who holds the No. 4 spot in the division, forfeited the match allowing TanHoldings, the division's No. 2, to keep its win streak.

DIVISION A
NMI U18 A 8, Old B Bank 0

NMI U18 took a lopsided win over Old B Bank behind Kaden Church who scored three goals while Taka Borja chipped in two.

Kohtaro Goto, Dev Bachani, and Aloy Angeles each pitched in a goal to add to the team's winning score.

The One 3, Kanoa 3

The One and Kanoa had a standoff in their match last Sunday ending the match in a draw.

The One's Timothy Tawanpiy carried the team scoring two of the team's overall goals with contribution from Scott Tae Heon Kim who added one.

Kanoa's John Canape, Jhoey Noble, and Andruw Omelau worked together making one goal apiece concluding the match in a tie.

DIVISION B
Island Star 4, Shirley's 3

Island Star took its first win of the season behind Feng Yu who made two of the team's four goals with help from John Jayson Colisao and Dan Deric Duroni Ibarra who added one goal each.

Guang Zhi Jin carried Shirley's with his two goals with help from Wesley Bogdan who made one goal.

Matansa 4, Women's National Team 1

Matansa's Rakib Hassan towed the team to victory behind his three goals, while Carl Walter Salas chipped in a goal in the 62nd minute.

WNT's Katrina Costales scored the team's only goal in the 40th minute.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NMIFA MEN'S LEAGUE STANDINGS

DIVISION A

RANK	CLUB	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	PAIRE FC	4	4	0	0	15	0	15	12
2	THFC	4	4	0	0	16	3	13	12
3	NMI U18 A	4	3	1	0	13	0	13	10
4	MP UNITED	4	2	0	2	7	7	0	6
5	KANOA	4	1	1	2	7	7	0	4
6	NMI U18 B	4	0	1	3	3	10	(7)	1
7	THE ONE FC	4	0	1	3	4	18	(14)	1
8	OLD B BANK	4	0	0	4	0	19	(19)	0

DIVISION B

RANK	CLUB	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	BANGLADESH FC	4	3	1	0	15	4	11	10
2	SAIPAN UNITED	4	3	0	1	6	3	3	9
3	MATANSA FC	4	2	1	1	17	14	3	7
4	SHIRLEY'S FC	4	2	0	2	12	8	4	6
5	ISLAND STAR	4	1	0	3	8	18	(10)	3
6	WNT	4	0	0	4	3	14	(11)	0

Jays' Yates faces year-ending elbow surgery; Springer ailing

TORONTO (AP)—Toronto Blue Jays reliever Kirby Yates is expected to have season-ending surgery on his right elbow, general manager Ross Atkins said Tuesday.

The Blue Jays also reported two other injuries: Outfielder George Springer will miss the next four or five days because of a strained oblique muscle and left-hander Robbie Ray will skip at least one spring training start after slipping on a staircase and bruising his elbow.

Yates was expected to be Toronto's closer after signing a $5.5 million, one-year deal in the offseason. On Monday, the team said Yates would miss several weeks because of a strained muscle in his forearm.

Yates last pitched Saturday against Philadelphia, striking out two in one scoreless inning. It was his second outing of the spring and his first since March 11.

The 33-year-old Yates was an All-Star with San Diego in 2019, when he posted a 1.19 ERA and led the NL with 41 saves. He pitched in six games for the Padres last season and had a 12.46 ERA before surgery to remove bone chips from his elbow.

Springer signed a $150 million, six-year deal in the offseason. The 2017 World Series MVP with Houston, he was scratched from a game on March 9 because of tightness in his abdominal muscles.

Springer had an MRI after experiencing persistent tightness, but Atkins said Toronto's prime acquisition still feels good and isn't expected to be out of action for long.

"The MRI revealed an injury that he is able to play baseball with," Atkins said. "He is extremely motivated and driven to be ready for opening day."

Atkins said Ray was carrying his child down the stairs at his rental home when he slipped and fell. Ray's child was uninjured in the fall, Atkins said.

NMI Women's Run set for this Saturday

The in-person NMI 10KWomen's Run, which was pushed back as a result of the recent identified COVID-19 community cluster, is set to commence this Saturday at 6am with the starting gun at the American Memorial Park at the Hyatt Regency Saipan side.

Female runners can participate in the 10K run/walk individually or on teams and the winning team will be able to donate all race proceeds to a CNMI Charity of their choice.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, interested male participants or women who can't make that race date and time can still enter in the virtual categories which includes the 5K and 10K solo and 5K team divisions.

Participants are invited to complete their chosen distance anytime during the month of March and upload the results in the Race Roster portal.

Northern Marianas Athletics is organizing the event in celebration of the 2021 Women's History Month and inviting everyone to heed the International Women's Day call to #ChooseToChallenge by coming out during the Month of March, running a distance of their choice and helping to honor women around. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

Harris comes up big late as Sixers hold off Warriors

PAGE 18

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Lawyer: Texans QB's assault suits followed blackmail attempt

PAGE 19

Bangladesh FC rises to the top

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bangladesh Football Club stole the Division B lead from Saipan United after besting them in their matchup last Saturday of the 2021 Spring M-League held at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Paire remained undefeated in Division A after its match against NMI U18 National Boys Team last Friday for the 2021 Spring M-League held at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Club is on top of the Division B standings of the 2021 Spring M-League after edging erstwhile leader Saipan United in their matchup last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Bangladesh FC escaped with a 2-0 victory over Saipan United behind Mohammad Ariful Islam and Soheal Akanda who worked hand in hand to carry the team to victory.

Islam took the lead for Bangladesh FC in the 45th minute followed by Akanda who chipped in a goal in the 46th minute.

The loss pushed Saipan United to the No. 2 spot in the overall standings followed by Matansa FC who also stole the spot from former Top 3 Shirley's FC.

In Division A, Tan-Holdings FC and Paire FC took contrasting wins in their matches last weekend to extend their win streak.

Paire nipped NMI U18 National Team B, 2-0, last Friday behind Zane Mowery and Erric Barajas who made one goal each.

Mowery landed his goal in the 38th minute to take the lead,

See BANGLADESH on Page 19

Iakopo wins Peewee 1 Class

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

JOSEPH CHIN

Conan Iakopo races in the second leg of the PeeWee 1 Class for the Marianas Racing Association's 2021 Point Series Race held monthly at the Cowtown Raceway Park in Marpi.

Conan Iakopo led from start to finish in the Peewee 1 Class of the Marianas Racing Association's 2021 Point Series Race's third round held last Sunday at the Cowtown Raceway Park in Marpi.

Iakopo, who just joined the series in the second leg held last month, has proven to be a tough competitor after taking the win in both heats to gain a perfect 50 points.

Despite just joining the series, Iakopo has already landed the Top 4 spot with an overall score of 94.

However, Zane Fujihara still remains in pole position with an overall score of 125 despite placing second in the third leg of the race earning him 40 points. Following Fujihara in the overall standings is Ezekiel Camacho who holds a score of 119.

Finishing third place in the third leg was Caleb Reyes with a score of 34 bringing his overall score to 86 placing him at No. 5 on the scoreboard.

In the Peewee 2 Class, Jonoah Santos continues to holds the top seat, retaining a perfect score of 150 throughout the entire series.

Santos held on to his win streak after placing first in both heats of the third round to gain him 50 points.

Keenon Togawa took second place in the third round of the series earning 44 points. Togawa also remains No. 3 in the overall standings with a score of 130.

T.J. Ferrer holds the No. 3 spot on the scoreboard with 78 points despite his absence in the second leg held last month. Ferrer also placed this in the third leg to gain 40 points.

Cherity Reyes, who came in during the second leg of the series, expanded her win streak in the Peewee ATV, topping foes in the first and second heat of the race last Sunday to gain 50 points. In just two races, Reyes has quickly climbed up the scoreboard and holds the No. 3 spot in the standings.

Brooklyn Susulin still sits at the top of the standings despite placing third in the third race last Sunday gaining 40 points. The additional 40 points puts her at 130. Skyler Togawa still tails Susulin in overall standings at 118 points after placing fourth last Sunday.

Keoni Rosario, who just joined the event last Sunday, kicked off the series on a high note. Rosario placed second during the third leg of the series earning him 44 points.